

Public Opinion in a Democracy

A Study in American Politics

POLITICAL SCIENCE SERIES

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A Study in American Politics

by

Charles W. Smith, Jr.

NEW YORK

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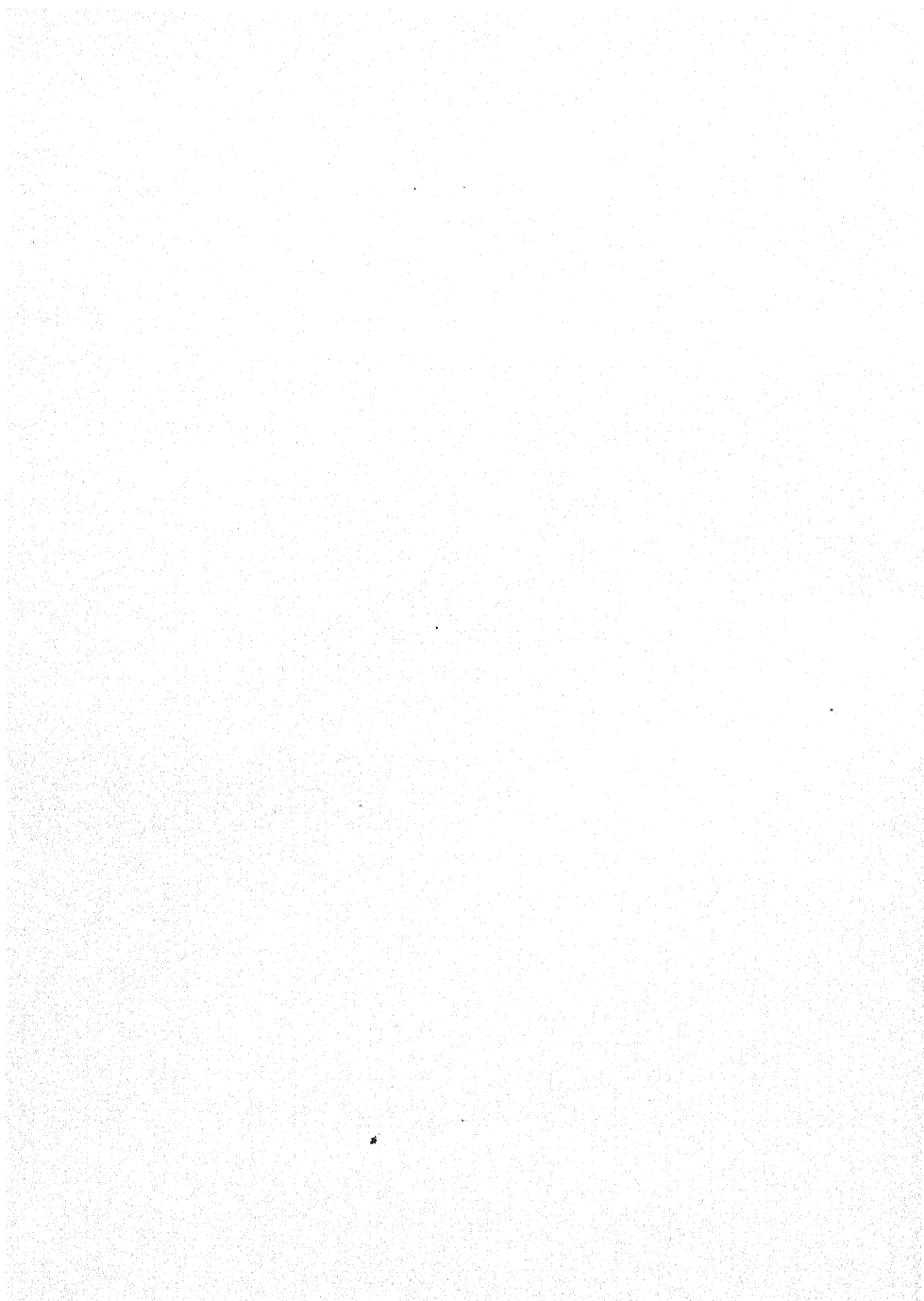
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First Printing.....February, 1939
Second Printing.....February, 1942
Third Printing.....June, 1947
Fourth Printing.....November, 1948

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO
ESSA
AND
CHARLES PHILIP



PREFACE

IN PARTS of the world people are doing strange things these days. Indeed there are some who think that we are doing strange things ourselves but, at least as this book goes to press, no government censor exists to toss it on a bonfire if perchance there be found in it any suggestion of political heresy.

The importance of public opinion is now appreciated as it has seldom been before. Is a new cigarette or a new tooth-paste to be marketed? Stage a publicity campaign! Is an Austria to be absorbed or a Czechoslovakia to be vivisected? Stage a publicity campaign! Are a people to be deprived of their liberties? Stage a publicity campaign in order that they may be persuaded to place the noose around their own necks! In the words of the President of the United States, as he surveyed the world at the beginning of 1939, "We have learned that long before any overt military act, aggression begins with preliminaries of propaganda, subsidized penetration, the loosening of ties of good will, the stirring of prejudice, and the incitement to disunion." The ratio of gullibility to sophistication among the people determines the success or failure of such campaigns. Unfortunately political sophistication in the contemporary world is less common than we imagined a short while ago. Since public opinion determines the routes we take as to many matters, some of which are as important as life itself, an examination of the forces that influence public opinion and the significance of opinions themselves now seems to be timely.

I learned my first lessons in politics and public affairs in the years just before the United States entered the World War

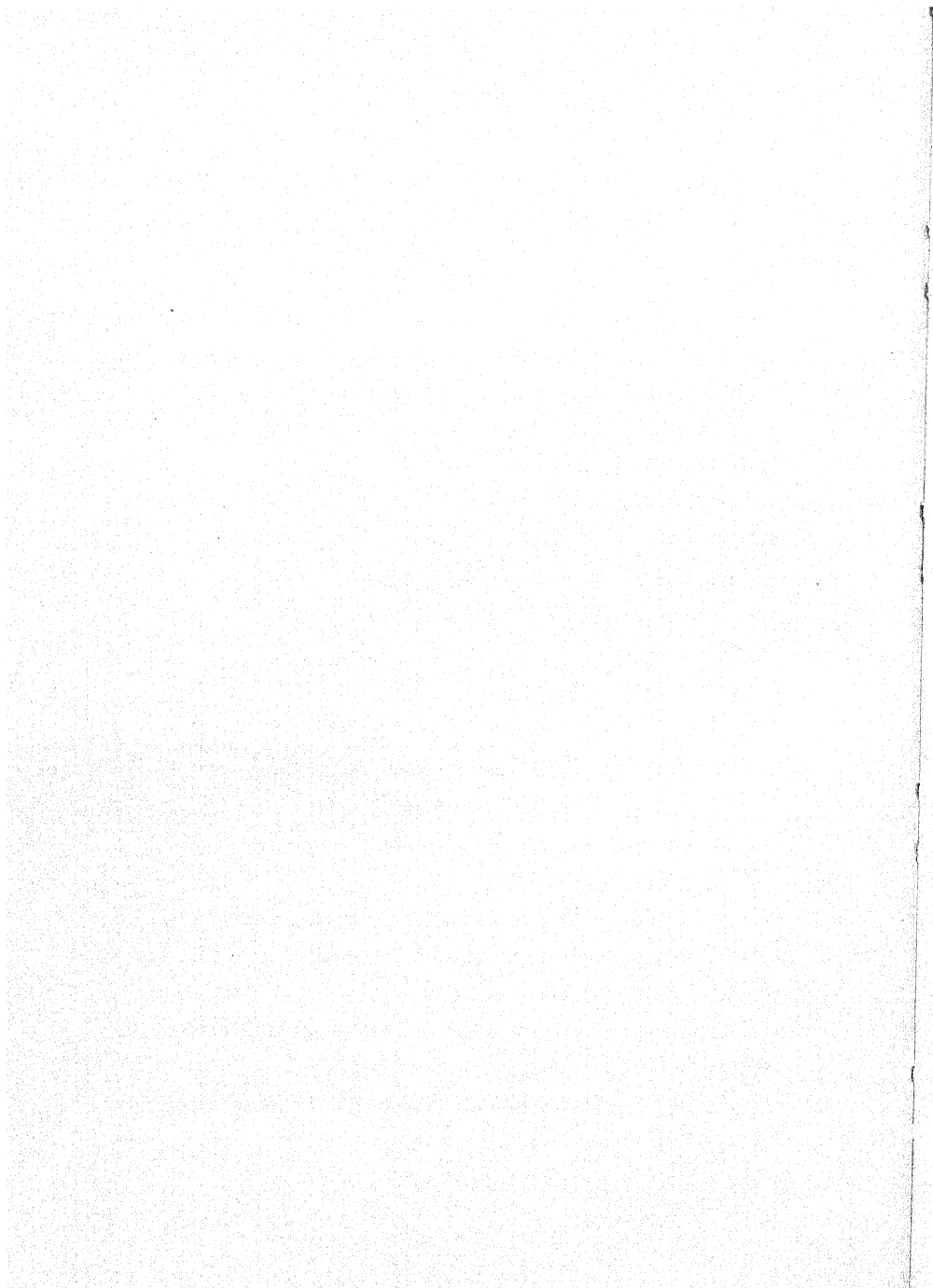
when, as a boy, I began going with my father to political meetings. In the relatively short period of time that has elapsed since then the whole outlook of the world has changed and many things have been turned topsy turvy. But despite the ominous developments of recent years I find it difficult to believe that everything we once thought true must now be discarded as false. This book is based on the assumption that public opinion in a democracy is still a virile force, and that democracy itself is not yet done for.

I am indebted to three of my colleagues, Roscoe C. Martin, George Pope Shannon, and Verner M. Sims, for assistance and encouragement of various kinds. Not one of them failed to respond generously when I asked for advice or submitted manuscript material to be read and criticized. I am grateful to Professor Schuyler C. Wallace of Columbia University for reading the manuscript and for the helpful suggestions which he made for its improvement.

CHARLES W. SMITH, JR.

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I

THE PEOPLE RULE

N EARLY fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, there came to the throne of Egypt as Amenhotep IV a young man who set out to make his conservative polytheistic people monotheists. He defied the priests of Amon and the lesser gods. He changed his own name to Ikhnaton and ordered the name of Amon hammered out where it appeared on tombstones in the great cemetery at Thebes or on the statues of his royal ancestors. Temples to the one god, Aton, were built all over Egypt. But the tide of tradition ran strong against this new religion, which disregarded some of the most cherished beliefs of the people. Aton was a strange god, and the people could not understand the refined theology of the young dreamer; hence the Aton-faith never became a popular religion. Added to the secret resentment and opposition of the masses was always the hatred of the priesthoods that had been deprived of rich property interests. All during Ikhnaton's reign they worked to undermine him.

After reigning about seventeen years, the young king died. Not long afterward the name of Amon was restored to the monuments from which it had been removed, and the priests of Amon returned to power. The name of Ikhnaton was hammered out and his tomb was wrecked. Every effort was made to wipe out all traces of his reign. When it was necessary to mention him, he was referred to as "the criminal of Akhetaton." The man whom Professor Breasted calls "the first *individual* in human history" had failed to make any permanent

impress on his people. He failed because he set himself against a powerful privileged class and a powerful popular tradition. The public would not change so suddenly on a fundamental matter of belief and practice.

In 399 B.C., an Athenian court of five hundred and one judges, by a majority of sixty votes, found a homely old man named Socrates guilty of impiety and of having corrupted the youth of the community and sentenced him to death. Scorning to run away, he drank the prescribed poison and died conversing with his friends. Socrates was the first champion of the supremacy of the mind as a court of last resort. To him knowledge and truth and the sovereignty of intellect were the criteria that should chart the individual's course, regardless of consequence or the prejudices of the people with whom he lived. He followed this doctrine himself consistently and without compromise as he went about among the Athenians, discussing the problems of human life. Some of the ablest young men of the time were his pupils. But he was unorthodox in his attitude both toward human authority and toward the gods. His sharp-tongued exposure of ignorance and superstition and hypocrisy made him unpopular with the masses. Democratic politicians regarded him as a dangerous free-thinker and his ideas as subversive of the established order. In time they brought charges against him and won their case in court. They thought that was the end of Socrates. For the time being, the conservatives had won again.

Approximately two hundred and fifty years later, in the Roman republic, economic conditions were bad. Most of the land had fallen into the hands of a small number of very wealthy landlords. Tiberius Gracchus resolved to do something about the situation. Tiberius was a well-educated young man of good family. He was headstrong and impulsive, quite sure of himself, and inclined to ride rough-shod over any oppo-

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sition that might stand in his way. The large landholders had leased public land from the government, their tenure in some cases running back a hundred years or more. Tiberius introduced a bill that would force holders of more than three hundred acres to give up land held in excess of that amount. The land relinquished was to be divided into thirty-acre plots and leased on easy terms to small farmers. He pushed his bill through the Assembly in the face of Senate opposition and the veto of a tribune. A Land Commission was appointed to carry out the reform. The opposition continued very bitter. When Tiberius ran for re-election as tribune, against the precedents of the past, and possibly contrary to the law, a group of his enemies in the Senate led their armed followers to the Forum and killed him. So ended the career of this tactless champion of the people when he was twenty-nine years old. In spite of continued opposition, his Land Commission was allowed to continue its work for a while, and some eighty thousand persons were resettled.

Ten years after the death of his brother, Caius Gracchus was elected tribune. Caius was a powerful orator and a hot enthusiast for any cause in which he believed. He was also a past master of political strategy. Against the opposition of a Senate firmly determined to block reform, he continued the work of his brother and moved on to more ambitious plans. Not content with economic reform, he proposed to give the people actual control over their own government. He would make the popular Assembly supreme in fact as well as in theory, and subordinate the Senate and the magistrates to it. Far-sighted statesman that he was, he did not neglect the exigencies of practical politics. He won the support of the city voters by having grain from the public granaries distributed to needy citizens at half price. He won the support of the capitalistic class by allowing them to garner profits from the provinces.

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In the meantime, the Land Commission continued its work of resettling small farmers, roads were built to facilitate commercial expansion, and colonies were founded at commercially strategic points.

If Caius had been content to continue his doles of grain to indigent city voters and to confine his reforms to Rome, he would probably have lasted longer, but he was clear sighted enough to see that the real basis of Roman prosperity depended on a prosperous and contented Italy. He planned to extend reform beyond the city limits. Well aware of the jealousy of Roman citizens toward their special privileges, he moved cautiously, but not cautiously enough to avoid arousing their ire. The opponents of Caius put forward another tribune to act as a counter-demagogue and outbid him for popular support. A franchise reform bill that Caius introduced was beaten; and when his term expired and he ran for re-election, he was defeated. Feeling ran high between the Gracchus party and its enemies. There was fighting, with the Gracchians getting the worst of it. Caius persuaded his slave to run him through before his enemies could kill him. He was thirty-two years old when he died, after having served the people as tribune for two years. His ideal of a thoroughgoing Roman democracy failed of realization, perhaps because the Roman mob were unworthy of it. The Gracchi were destroyed because the people were misled.

After the death of the second of the Gracchi, the work that they had done was largely undone. The rich again absorbed the lands of the poor, slave gangs increased, and the free peasantry disappeared. In time there was civil war. Finally, in 60 B.C., a triumvirate of unscrupulous practical politicians gained control of the government. Crassus and Pompey and Julius Caesar were the three. Caesar was the ablest member of the ring. A man of noble descent and magnetic personality,

he courted public favor by spending huge sums on public games and food for the mob. Soon he began to lay plans for seizing supreme power for himself. The death of Crassus left only Pompey in his way. Both redoubled their efforts to win the public by lavishly building theaters and providing magnificent games for the people. The Roman public in those days was inclined to go to the highest bidder. In this case, however, a civil war was necessary to decide the contest, and from it Caesar emerged the winner, well on his way to dictatorship. But Caesar had his enemies, both personal and political, and in 44 B.C. he was assassinated. It was a turbulent time, when Roman political institutions were in a state of evolution and the allegiance of the public was an uncertain and fickle thing.

In 1199, the worst king that England has ever had ascended the throne. The historian John Richard Green quotes with approval the verdict of John's contemporaries that hell itself was defiled by his presence. But before he went on to the pollution of hell, John tarried seventeen years in England. Within five years after he began to reign, he had lost all of England's possessions in Normandy. Before long he quarreled with the Pope and was forced into abject submission. He taxed his people heavily, submitted them to personal indignities, defied the barons, seized their castles and took their children for hostages, and, when he bestowed favors, gave them to foreigners instead of Englishmen. At last the worm turned. In 1214, while the king was on a blundering expedition in France, his barons took counsel together and decided to force from him a charter of rights. When John returned, they marched to meet him. The king, finding himself without any powerful support, facing a nation in arms, capitulated without delay and signed the Magna Carta, which the barons thrust upon him.

Although Magna Carta is not a democratic document if measured by modern standards, it did proclaim the sovereignty

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of the law and define arbitrary punishment as illegal. In spite of the fact that its provisions were sometimes disregarded in the years that followed, it was a significant step in the evolution of popular government. England was never again so safe for tyrants as it had been before. Kings were receding, the people were on the march.

In 1800, when Thomas Jefferson was a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, the Federalists told lies about his private life, said that he hated the Constitution, and warned the people that if he were elected he would turn out all Federalist officeholders, tumble the financial system of the country into ruin, stop payments of interest on the public debt, bring on "universal bankruptcy and beggary," and dismantle the Navy. Clergymen intemperately denounced him from their pulpits as an atheist and a scoffer at religion. But Jefferson was a master politician as well as a statesman of the first rank. He was the idol of the masses. For several years, under his leadership a campaign of publicity and propaganda had been carried on throughout the country. In 1800 his work bore fruit. The party of "the rich, the well-born, and the able" went down to defeat, and he was elected President. When he left the Presidency, the Federalist party was sick unto death.

The first democratic revolution set the nation going on a path that made it unlikely that there would ever again arise a party whose advocates would openly proclaim their belief that the common people were "too abject in ignorance to think rightly, and too depraved to draw honest deductions." The government of the United States was to be one responsive to public opinion.

In 1896, a handsome young orator from Nebraska proclaimed to a wildly enthusiastic national convention: "There are two ideas of government. There are those who believe that if you just legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosper-

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ity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous their prosperity will find its way up and through the class and rest upon it." When his party nominated him for President and adopted a platform in harmony with his views, the *New York Tribune* condemned the platform as "a rallying cry for all the elements of unrest and disorder" in American politics. It was "an anarchist and socialist platform." Bryan, they said, was "a logical leader of the forces of ignorance, prejudice and unrest which have seized the control of the Democratic organization." If these people ever got into control, pontificated the *Tribune*, they would "ruin this country with astonishing rapidity." An ex-president of Cornell University rallied the conservatives by telling them that the platform aimed at "present and prospective anarchy and socialism." A prominent Baptist minister of Brooklyn told his congregation, "I shall denounce the Chicago platform. That platform was made in hell. Dishonesty never came from heaven; anarchy never came from heaven; classmaking and disunion never came from that upper world." Banks threatened to cut off credit from their debtors if they voted for Bryan. Corporations threatened to dismiss employees or go out of business if Bryan was elected. The propaganda and the money of the prophets of doom were effective, and Bryan was defeated.

From 1896 until his death, the newspapers of the country regularly every four years, either before or after the Presidential election, proclaimed Bryan's political power ended. But his wife, writing shortly after his death, called attention to the fact that he had advocated a Federal income tax, direct election of United States Senators, publicity of campaign contributions, woman suffrage, representation of labor in the cabinet, railroad rate regulation, and currency reform, and that all these things had been brought about. Had she lived to see the administra-

tion of the second Roosevelt, she could have added the guarantee of bank deposits and other larger policies to her list of the triumphs of the measures advocated by her husband. The third democratic revolution was in process.

In 1928, the Republican platform said, "By unwavering adherence to sound principles, through the wisdom of Republican policies, and capacity of Republican administrations, the foundations have been laid and the greatness and prosperity of the country firmly established. . . . No better guarantee of prosperity and contentment among all our people . . . can be given than the pledge to maintain the Coolidge policies. . . . The record of the present administration is a guarantee of what may be expected of the next." The voters believed it and elected Herbert Hoover President. A year later the depression broke; and four years later, when the President was a candidate for reelection and spoke in Middle Western cities, he had the streets heavily lined with soldiers because he thought he needed them to protect him from the people. Still, he proclaimed the soundness of his policies and the danger of electing his opponent, but his opponent was elected by a tremendous majority. In 1936, big business men told their employees to vote against Roosevelt, and he and his supporters were called communists and anarchists and all the other names that had been used against Bryan in 1896. After a hard campaign and the tireless efforts of crusading leaders, the Republicans managed to carry only Maine and Vermont. The current of popular feeling had left them behind. In their daze, some of the leaders began to fear that a place was being prepared for their party beside the casket of the party that Thomas Jefferson had laid to rest when it got out of touch with the current of the times. In the Elysian Fields, William Jennings Bryan must have smiled.

These are dramatic illustrations of the exercise of the people's power, picked almost at random from the history of the last

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thirty-five hundred years. The people have often acted foolishly, they have often been misled by demagogues and false prophets and been abused by tyrants, but there has never been a time in the whole period when rulers or priests or anybody else could consistently and flagrantly defy the settled will of the people and permanently succeed.

The nature of the public will and the manner of its expression has been in a process of development through the years. It has been becoming less phlegmatic and more articulate. At first it was largely a matter of tradition. Primitive peoples moved in a beaten path with almost irresistible force. We moderns have the same tendency, but variation is not always considered treason, and we like to believe that the direction in which we move is, more than it used to be, a result of our own thinking.

The trend of political evolution has been toward the development of governments more sensitive to public opinion. Both gains and losses have occurred along the way, but the tendency has been for the Gracchi to win more often and the Caesars less as time has gone on. The expression of the public will no longer need take such a violent course as it once did. In the democracies of our time, we would no longer put a Socrates to death, although we might not allow him to teach very long in any of our great universities. When a modern statesman of the Gracchus pattern—a La Follette, for instance—is beaten at the polls, the conservative Republicans do not organize an armed mob to kill him and decimate his followers with the sword. Not since 1688 have the English had to use armed force or the threat of armed force to bring the policies of their rulers into line with the public will. King John's successor cannot even choose his own personal friends without an eye to public opinion, and if he leaves the throne, he leaves without a ripple.

Dictators have revived in the modern world a form of govern-

ment that we had long considered obsolete. Were it not for their repeated triumphs and the formidable prestige that they have thus acquired, we might consider dictatorship in the modern world only a temporary phenomenon. Possibly such a view is not erroneous even now. Certainly the dictatorships have arisen in countries where political and economic conditions were pathological. But they have entrenched themselves so strongly that their end probably will not come immediately with a return to better conditions. Like some diseases, they are harder to cure than to prevent; and also like some diseases, they have a tendency to spread where resistance is weak. The way to prevent their spread is to maintain healthy conditions. They will give way in time if democracy is able to command the loyalty of the peoples where it yet remains and maintain itself long enough to demonstrate again to a critical world its superiority as a way of life for civilized men.

Public opinion is today a sovereign force. The task of democratic institutions is to provide effective machinery for the translation of the public will into action and to make public opinion worthy of its power. When the government and other public agencies grow corrupt, when the people become indifferent, or the load of economic maladjustment is too heavy to be borne, then the Caesars replace the Gracchi, and the progress of two thousand years may be threatened by the tragedy of one generation. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," the fathers said. Liberty is considered by some men the most prized of their possessions. Only intelligent people deserve it or can keep it. Public opinion will remain actively in control of the instrumentalities that preserve popular liberties only if the people are alert to its significance.

II

PUBLIC OPINION

S AID Montesquieu, "The public business must be carried on with a certain motion, neither too quick nor too slow. But the motion of the people is always too remiss or too violent. Sometimes with a hundred thousand arms they overturn all before them; and sometimes with a hundred thousand feet they creep like insects." His statement may be supported by many illustrations, as vividly as any by the great revolutions, such as the French or Russian, where the pent up wrath of an oppressed people bursts its bounds and attempts to wipe out the accumulated injustices of centuries in a sea of blood, taking for its victims not only the guilty but often many of the innocent as well. But such revolutions do not come very often. Typically, the ebb and flow of the public will shows itself in less spectacular ways in the everyday life of a people. Modern democracies provide established channels through which the people make their will known with directness and force. Their opinions guide the government in an almost day-by-day process. Such a process makes for less daily stability of policy than would be found characteristic of governments not sensitive to public opinion, but it also makes less likely the possibility of violent revolution. The little fluctuations eliminate the need for the big ones. Government by public opinion gives elasticity to political institutions.

The people of a democracy are perennially being called upon to make great decisions. In the United States of 1800, the Jeffersonian revolution, by the popular will, changed the whole

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meaning of the American constitution and the direction of American political development. Some years later, a new democratic revolution found national expression in Jacksonian democracy. Then the question of slavery agitated the nation, to be settled only by the Civil War. In our own time, American political leaders have been forced by popular demand to grapple with the difficult problems of a great depression. An economic system that has grown almost too big and too complex for human intelligence has turned loose forces that we seem unable to master. Economic insecurity hangs like a never-absent dark cloud over a large proportion of the population. Laborers are restless with a feeling that they have been exploited too long. Capitalists are apprehensive lest their property and power be taken away, and are ready to defend their interests with all the strength at their command. Many thoughtful people are afraid that democracy will not stand the strain. Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*, Hamilton Fish Armstrong's *We or They*, and other books, as well as numerous magazine articles and newspaper editorials, give evidence of an undercurrent fear that Americans must be on guard against dictatorship. Ambassador William E. Dodd, distinguished student of American history, expressed the belief in a letter made public May 11, 1937, that, "The situation is more dangerous than at any time since Lincoln." The issues involved are of more fundamental importance to the whole life of the American people than any others they will be called upon to face.

Great issues are settled in the United States by public opinion, we are told, but what public opinion is, we cannot so easily be told. Within the last few years, a realization of the tremendous importance of this compelling force has led to an increasing study of its nature and its functioning. As a start toward the development of knowledge on the subject, attempts have been

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made to define clearly what is public and what is opinion. Various conclusions and definitions have been advanced.

John Dewey draws the line between public and private matters by defining as private, actions whose consequences affect, or seem to affect, only the persons directly engaged in them. When the consequences of an act indirectly affect others besides the actors in any significant way, the act is a public one. The public may organize itself into a state to regulate such transactions and protect its interests. Walter Lippmann defines public affairs as those which affect groups of people. A public, then, would consist of a group of people affected by the same affairs. In a large group, he would not have the public act as judges of the merits of complicated questions calling for political action, but rather as spectators who would make and enforce certain rules of the game. Some writers have assumed that the public consists only of those who have the right of participation in government, but this makes the public synonymous with political organization and is therefore a too narrow conception. Membership in the public is not synonymous with citizenship. A British subject, for example, may live in an American community, may lecture, teach, belong to a service club, pay taxes, and contribute to the formation of public opinion. He is a member of the American public. The public is not organized as a public. Its members are organized in various ways: politically in the state and its subdivisions, religiously in churches, socially in clubs, for economic purposes in labor unions and trade associations.

Possibly the theorists of public opinion have made their definitions of the public unduly complicated and technical. It will make for clarity if we think of the public simply as composed of all the people capable of thought in a particular area or group. It may be suggested that we should limit the public

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to those who have an interest in, or an opinion on, group affairs. However, in a broad sense, and a very real sense, all persons have an interest in public affairs in any particular community. Of course, all do not count equally in public opinion. The bank president is more influential than the grocery clerk. The school superintendent carries more weight than the janitor. Particular individuals may not exert any influence at all, but they are part of the public and capable of exerting some sort of influence, or at least of making themselves heard, if they choose to bestir themselves. The attitudes and concerns of even the humblest persons have some significance. All must obey the same laws. All must conform to the moral standards of the community or suffer condemnation. All would say the proper things and read the proper books and walk in the shadow of the concentration camp if dictatorship succeeded democracy. All are members of the public because all are linked together by their common existence.

There are publics of varying sizes. We may speak of public opinion in "this neighborhood," meaning a locality where people send their children to the same school or go to the same church or trade at the same country store. We may speak of public opinion in a village, or in a city, or in a region such as the Middle West, or in the Metropolitan Area around New York City. A newspaperman described a small public when he wrote, "The *Missourian* editor spent Monday afternoon in Coffey mixing and visiting with the good people there, and we enjoyed a fine afternoon in this splendid, thriving North Daviess County town. . . . We had not been there five minutes until they were telling us about how proud the citizens were of their Coffey school. . . . There was every evidence of a busy trading place Monday, and all the business men reported a good business and a large crowd on the Saturday previous. . . . Coffey has two excellent banks, both in good condition,

well kept and substantial mercantile stocks, loyal, live-wire citizens and the town serves a wide trade territory. The Coffey band gave its first concert of the season Saturday night and of course a large crowd was present to enjoy the music. . . .” For some purposes the people of the whole United States are one public. In 1896, William Jennings Bryan said, “I tell you that the great cities rest upon these broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms and your cities will spring up again as if by magic. But destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in this country.” In each instance we are thinking of a group of people bound to one another by living together.

Some might wish to consider groups other than those within a particular area as constituting publics. We might think, for instance, of the Catholics as constituting a public for some purposes. The Protestants or the Masons or the American Legion might be put in the same category. But for practical purposes it is better to consider such groups as only parts of the public. Certainly they do not live to themselves alone in most of their important activities. What they do and think affects the community, and what the community does affects them. We may, if we like, think of the public as being composed of federalistic elements. It may be composed of capitalists and laborers, Protestants and Catholics and Jews, ex-soldiers, Communists, and Daughters of the American Revolution. Each such group may have its own set of particular interests and viewpoints, but each is part of the public, and they are all interdependent.

Once we have determined upon the content of the term “the public,” we proceed to consider the nature of opinion and of public opinion. Opinion implies an element of choice. In any real sense, it implies some deliberative freedom in man.¹ It is

¹ Francis Graham Wilson, *The Elements of Modern Politics*, 248. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

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belief that has a certain amount of force. Every individual has a headful of opinions on a wide variety of subjects. They need not be based upon much knowledge or thought. In fact, the tenacity with which they are held is often greatest where the knowledge is least. In any case, the impression and the belief are there, whether it be a question of the best method of planting potatoes, or the iniquity of Dr. Tugwell, or the teaching of Greek. The owner faces the world and participates in its affairs with opinions as part of his most important equipment.

Public opinion has been defined in different ways. Walter Lippmann uses the term in one sense as meaning the opinions of the individual on public affairs, and in another sense as meaning the opinions acted upon by groups of people or by individuals acting in the name of groups.² A. Lawrence Lowell has suggested that real public opinion must be something more than the opinion of the majority, it must be such that the minority will feel bound by conviction to accept it.³ E. L. Bernays describes public opinion as "an ill-defined . . . and changeable group of individual judgments," the "aggregate result of individual opinions" of the people who make up a society.⁴ James Bryce said that it was not enough to think of public opinion as the aggregate of discrepant and varying notions and beliefs on public affairs held by the people in a community, and he went on to say:

But in the midst of this diversity and confusion every question as it rises to importance is subjected to a process of consolidation and clarification until there emerge and take definite shape certain views, each held and advocated in common by bodies of citizens. . . . Or we may think of the Opinion of a whole nation as made up of different currents of sentiment, each embodying or supporting a view

² Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 29. The Macmillan Company.

³ A. Lawrence Lowell, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*, 15. Longmans, Green & Company.

⁴ Edward L. Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, 61. Liveright Publishing Company.

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or a doctrine or a practical proposal. Some currents develop more strength than others . . . and when one is evidently the strongest, it begins to be called Public Opinion *par excellence*, being taken to embody the view supposed to be held by the bulk of the people.⁵

Public opinion, then, is not the sum total of the individual opinions of isolated men. It is made up of the opinions of men living an associational life and affected by their contacts with one another. Common interests, common elements of environment and inheritance, similar sources of information, and discussion among individuals give it unity of force. Public opinion is reflected not only in political matters, but also in matters of morals and art and in all the other common interests of human beings. Public opinion in one locality may condemn smoking by women or beer drinking or cutting off dogs' tails. In another community, it may set its stamp of approval on these activities or disregard them. Public opinion may lead to legislation, but not necessarily so.

Public opinion is not likely to be an accurate projection of the opinions held in the closeted recesses of individual minds. In the opinions we make public, and in our actions, we must give thought to appearances. Our expressed opinions are likely to be conventionalized versions of our real opinions. We are influenced by the imagined judgment of the group. Our contribution to public opinion is modified by what we think other people are thinking. This is one reason why public opinion is often a conservative force. People are afraid to break away from established ways of doing things, and afraid to express approval of those who do break away. It is perfectly respectable to agree with the Daughters of the American Revolution, but we read communist literature furtively—and if we agree with its teachings, we feel constrained to label them with other

⁵ From James Bryce, *Modern Democracies*, Vol I, 153, 154. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

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names. In the years immediately following the World War, it was the fashion for conservatives to shout "Send him to Russia!" whenever a daring soul ventured to express a liberal idea. Such sentiment probably did not represent the will of the bulk of the people, but conservatives acted as though it did, and often they were not seriously challenged. Public opinion tends to follow conservative leadership until the minds of individuals move forward to the point where old positions are so obviously untenable that reasonable men are compelled to abandon them. Political leaders who have axes to grind or ideas to sell recognize this principle and make use of it. Fascism is a revolutionary system that destroys human rights and moral standards that have been centuries in the making, but its advocates pose before the public as saviors against the dreaded menace of communism. The advocates of change must appeal to opinion that is influenced by what is respectable.

The opinions of a public are not to be ascertained merely by counting heads. Other factors besides mere numbers must be taken into consideration. Intensity of opinion is important. A Hitler fired with crusading zeal will make followers of more intelligent men who lack his certainty that they know the recipe for the good life. If a large minority hold to a viewpoint with strong conviction while the majority are lukewarm in their adherence to the other side, the viewpoint of the determined minority will dominate the group ultimately if not immediately. The ideas of men with knowledge on a particular subject will carry more weight than the beliefs of an equal number of ignorant men. The ideas of men who have a definite goal in mind will be more effective than the ideas of those who are only drifting. The organized will prevail over the unorganized.

In political matters, there cannot be any public opinion

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worthy of the name unless the great bulk of the people are agreed upon the fundamental aims and principles of government. The public may be composed of diverse elements, but it will produce nothing worthy to be called public opinion on political affairs unless there is general acceptance of certain basic principles. There cannot be a public opinion in a country where part of the people are fascists and believe in fascist tactics of force, and part of the people are communists and accept the communist doctrine of violent revolution, and part of the people are liberals who believe in settling problems of government by peaceful methods. Public opinion is composed of a current of individual opinions that have been subjected "to a process of consolidation and clarification" until they have attained unity of direction. If individual opinions are not similar enough to flow together, there cannot be a public opinion. For example, before the Civil War there was not a public opinion on the slavery question in the United States as a whole. There were at least two opposing viewpoints, so antagonistic that compromise was impossible. In Hitler's Germany there is room for only Nazis, in Mussolini's Italy there is room for only Fascists, and in Russia only one brand of Communists may survive. Where hostile philosophies clash head-on, there can be no amalgam of ideas, no single force worthy, to be called public opinion.

A real public opinion is possible in the United States, and sovereign, because most of us accept the doctrine of majority rule and the liberal principle that decisions should be made at the ballot box or by our representatives after free peaceful discussion. When the Democrats sweep the country, the Republicans may grumble, but they do not stage an armed uprising. They set about establishing an organization that will wage a vigorous campaign to convert public opinion to their point of

view. We are generally agreed on the desirability of government according to the will of the people as expressed through the established channels.

Public opinion on questions political or otherwise is not always either right or wise. Ibsen has one of his characters say, "The majority *never* has right on its side. . . . Who is it that constitute the majority of the population in a country? . . . I don't imagine you will dispute the fact that at present the stupid people are in an overwhelming majority all the world over. . . . The minority is always in the right." This is a pessimistic and not wholly accurate viewpoint. Assuming that the stupid people are in the majority, one must admit that they sometimes follow the wise and good, although they may at other times be led astray by glib knaves. The believer in democracy holds that they will usually follow the good leaders instead of the knaves if there is full and free discussion and the people have a chance to hear the evidence from all sides. Thomas Jefferson expressed the democratic viewpoint when he said, "Truth will do well enough if left to shift for herself. . . . She has no need of force to procure entrance into the minds of men."

As a matter of fact, the formation of an intelligent opinion is easier in some cases than in others. On some matters an intelligent public opinion is impossible, men being what they are. Aristotle suggested that the commons be empowered to elect officers of state and hold them responsible, although individually the common people should not be allowed to hold all offices. He had faith in their collective judgment on the work of their agents and on general matters of policy. His view suggests a truth, even more apparent in modern times, that the public is capable of forming an intelligent opinion on matters of general principle but is not equipped with the knowledge to

pass wisely on its detailed application in concrete cases. In our time, government is growing increasingly complex, and specialized knowledge is becoming increasingly essential in administration. Correspondingly, the range of questions on which the public is incapable of forming an intelligent opinion is rapidly increasing. Most citizens, for instance, are not adequately equipped, except as to general principles and broad outlines, to form an intelligent opinion on the foreign policy of the United States, or on the conduct of the TVA or the Interstate Commerce Commission or the Resettlement Administration. And the mass of the people will not spend much effort mastering facts that do not affect their daily lives or seem to touch their own interests in some significant way. Even if they had the desire to inform themselves on all the matters of government that are concerned with the general welfare, they would find it a sheer impossibility. More and more the details must be left to experts and not to public opinion. The public can pass judgment only on the results and on the principles that furnish the guides for action.

The individual forms his opinions as a result of the influence of various factors. He does not always respond with his mind to propositions put before him. Broad and fundamental opinions are likely to be formed gradually and to be relatively permanent when formed. They are a result, in varying degrees, of reason, prejudice, and experience. Casual opinions are formed in a short time in reaction to what the individual thinks he sees in the world before him. And the world of affairs is so large and life is so complex that opinions are likely to be based upon an inadequate knowledge of the facts. In our minds is developed a simplified picture of our environment that serves as a working model to guide our attitudes and actions. We base opinions on what we hear and read and imagine.

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Even in instances of first hand observation, we are influenced in what we see by our background of emotional and intellectual habits and a general set of beliefs.

Many of our opinions are solidly based on rationalizations. We get beliefs from our associations and environment and then find reasons for believing what we already believe. The individual who was born into a Democratic family and still votes the ticket straight has probably acquired a good set of reasons for his party loyalty. The stockholder in an industry protected by a high tariff holds a very real and firm conviction that a protective tariff is necessary to the country's welfare. The consumer who has no stock and has to pay the resulting cost increase on what he buys may believe just as firmly that a protective tariff is unsound, uneconomical, and injurious to the best interests of the country. The man with a low income believes in a graduated income tax; the man with a high income resents it as an unjust taking of his property. The holder of such views regards them as reasonable and he believes his opponents are unreasonable and acts accordingly, particularly if matters involving fundamental economic interests or political or religious intolerance are at issue.

As we survey the world around us, we develop what Walter Lippmann calls stereotypes—that is, standardized ideas or beliefs. If we have known a foreigner who seemed rude and dirty, we acquire a mental picture of a rude and dirty individual that stands for "foreigner." Whenever the word "foreigner" is mentioned, the picture comes to mind. As a result of recent propaganda, the name du Pont has come to stand for something sinister and powerful in politics. If the orator wants to arouse a certain emotion in an audience of the common people, he talks about the du Ponts. "Economic royalists" is a term that has a similar effect. Correspondingly, we may say, he is a Liberty Leaguer, or this is a policy favored by the Liberty

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League. When the founders of the Liberty League chose their name, they expected the sacred word liberty to arouse in the public mind the favorable emotions usually aroused by the term, but their opponents outgeneraled them and built a picture in the public mind that was just the opposite of that intended by the founders to be there. Before long, the mere mention of the name of the Liberty League in any ordinary audience was enough to bring forth either jeers or laughter. During the World War, a little American girl heard her parents refer to an individual in the community, whom the family knew quite well, as a German. "Is he a German?" she asked in surprise. "Why I thought he was a man." Her childish stereotype of "a German" as something different from a human being was a result of the war-prejudiced talk that she had heard from her associates. In regard to a great many matters, we form our stereotypes on rather casual and wholly inadequate experience or information and never seriously modify them. We cannot get all the facts, so we generalize from samples. When matters have a significant and direct interest for us, or for some reason we are repeatedly drawn into contact with the facts, we build opinions based on sounder foundations.

Orators and authors and others who seek to manipulate public opinion make use of symbols as important tools with which to arouse desired reactions. Mention the name of Lincoln to a Republican audience and you will have them on their feet cheering enthusiastically, even though some of them are liberals and others conservatives, some from Wisconsin and others from Vermont, some from the farm and others from the ranks of the millionaires. Talk about home and mother and the American flag and the full dinner pail, have the audience sing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and the most enthusiastic harmony will prevail. If symbols are used generously at frequent intervals, men may forget to think, and all will be well.

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A motion picture not so long ago had an actor playing the part of a medicine salesman who traveled by boat from one town to another along the river. He had a figure as part of a show that he used to entertain his prospective customers. In the North it represented General Grant. When he went into the South, he changed the hat around a little and made other minor adjustments and the figure was Robert E. Lee. Thus, the same figure could serve as two symbols and be made to arouse U. S. Grant emotions in the North and Robert E. Lee emotions in the South, and everybody was happy and bought lots of medicine. In December, 1936, *The New York Times* carried a headline, NAZI ELITE GUARDS IN FAVOR OF NUDISM, and under it, "Difference Between Nakedness Under Third Reich and the Republican Period Stressed." The article explained how Nazi leaders had advocated nudism because they wanted German boys and girls to be drawn to their mates unimpeded by the camouflage of clothes. But nudism had been associated in the public mind with communism and radicalism, and hence was odious to the orthodox; hence the Nazi advocates of "naktkultur" explained that National Socialist nudism was very different from communist nudism. They were rearranging the hat on General Grant. By changing the symbol, they hoped to change the reaction. Symbols are a short cut to public support. They are a substitute for an appeal to reason.

Impressions from which beliefs will spring may be planted in our minds in various ways. Some come from experience, either casual or continued. Others are planted by a human being whom we regard as an authority. It may be a parent or a teacher or someone else. Others are planted by newspapers. An outstanding professor of international law who had received his doctor's degree from a German university was talking to a young instructor a few years ago about the atrocity stories of

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the World War. Referring to one in particular, he said, "I believed it because I saw it in the *Times*." One of the pictures that formed the background for his opinion of German conduct in the War was thus implanted by the newspaper that he considered authoritative. Men not so well educated will have to depend even more completely on impressions given them by a few sources of information. If pictures planted by "authorities" lead to an opinion that takes deep root, the individual will consider the person authoritative who waves the symbol at him.

In a large society, the formation of intelligent opinions on public matters becomes increasingly difficult. In the New England town meeting, the citizen could act intelligently because he was close to the scene of action; his opinions were formed by direct contact with the problems involved and refined by discussion with his neighbors. In a large country, decisions are made a long way from the people. What does the average American know about what government officials are doing at Washington? He can get only the information given to him by newspapers or the radio or by an occasional orator who comes to his home town for some particular purpose. Censorship at the source or willful distortion of the news may prevent him from getting all the facts. Lack of interest will prevent him from taking advantage of all the information available. The fact that, in most cases, he has to earn a living will limit his time and his ability to become acquainted with all the possible information. Under such circumstances, public opinions of real worth can be formed only on a limited number of issues. When opinions are formed, the voters may demonstrate them in a rough way by voting for one set of candidates or another at election time. Between elections they can make their influence felt through less formalized channels, perhaps by writing to their congressmen or to the newspapers or by talking to their

neighbors. How intelligent their opinions will be depends largely upon the opportunity they have had to get the facts and the interest they have shown in the available information.

The Greeks thought there could be no such thing as a democratically controlled large state. Representative government is our attempt to solve the problem of popular control in such a state. But the public has grown so large in our time that the people have difficulty in passing judgment on the work of their agents. Modern democracy faces the great task of keeping individuals alert and interested in matters of common concern to the vast public of which they are a part, if the day-by-day impact of the public on its representatives is to be the wholesome and vitalizing force that it should be.

III

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WHEN Bronson Alcott asked his daughters one day what was the noblest work of God, Anna replied "men," but ten-year-old Louisa said "babies," because men are often bad but babies never are. After that, she reports in her diary, they had a long talk, and she felt considerably "cleared up." Her experience was one common to children. When there is uncertainty as to facts or attitudes, the parents are the ones who "clear it up." By questions and by conversation and in more subtle ways the child absorbs the attitudes and outlook of the family of which he is a part. Henry Adams was not relating a unique experience when he wrote that his father's character contributed more to his education than did the influence of any other single person. Interestingly, he illustrated family influence when he told how Charles Francis Adams followed in the footsteps of his father in the political causes that he championed, and then went on to say that the children of Charles Francis who were too young to have principles "were anti-slavery by birth, as their name was Adams and their home was Quincy."

Wisconsin's Robert M. La Follette served in the state legislature and in the governor's chair and in Congress for thirty-five years. When he died, his older son was elected to the United States Senate to take his place. A few years later, his younger son, scarcely more than thirty years old, was elected governor of the state. When opponents talked of the dangers of youth and inexperience and of the establishment of a dynasty, as Zona Gale tells it, the supporters of the young candidate replied, "It

is not his youth that you fear, but the blood that courses in his veins." Never since they came into public life has there been a time when the two sons have not shown clearly the influence of the blood that courses in their veins. The reason is not hard to find. From the time when the La Follette children were old enough to understand English, they were allowed to hear discussions of political questions and social justice. While yet children, they heard about how the railroads had been charging unjustifiable rates and avoiding heavy taxation, and how these abuses were to be remedied. They received training in social values almost with the air they breathed. They absorbed the spirit that made their father and mother campaign the state together without regard to the condition of the roads or other inconveniences because "the people must understand." The family was a unit. Now the old Senator and his wife are gone, but the two sons remain and the work goes on. Zona Gale wrote in the *Nation* several years ago, "The La Follette family is an instance of something more than patriarchal, of more than domination. It is an example of a fact of nature: Of group reaction and group thinking and group action as a psychological verity. . . ."

Although all families do not show so much unity as the La Follettes, the influence of the home is one of the most important factors in the lives of its members. The explanation is to be found first in the facts of nature. Human babies come into the world the most unfinished of all young animals, and the child's long period of immaturity makes necessary a long period in the home under parental care. During all this time the child is civilized and humanized according to the pattern of the parents. The first opinions with which it has contact are those of its parents and brothers and sisters. The attitudes and prejudices of the parents are absorbed by the child. Their physical and mental habits and their moral outlook will almost

inevitably be of critical importance in the formative years of the child's life. The family is the original molder of opinions.

Belief in the right of parents to control the early training and environment of their children is so deeply woven into the fabric of our thought that it is recognized as a settled principle of American law. When the Nebraska Legislature, under the influence of World War psychology, enacted a law that forbade the teaching of German in the elementary schools, the Supreme Court of the United States held it unconstitutional. One of their objections was that it interfered "with the power of parents to control the education of their own." The "liberty" of the Fourteenth Amendment was interpreted to include the right of parents to engage modern language teachers for the instruction of their children. A few years later, when Oregon passed a law requiring parents and guardians to send children between the ages of eight and sixteen years to the public schools, the Court held that the act "unreasonably interferes with the liberty of parents and guardians to direct the upbringing and education of children under their control," and went on to say, "The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations."

Although the family still occupies a position of pre-eminent importance in the social life of our time, a number of factors are making for its disorganization. In the cities, particularly, it no longer occupies the monopolistic position in the life of the young that it did in times past. Apartments have taken the place of homes with room and a yard. Many times the mother works outside the home. The children go to school very early in life, and after a few years go to work. In homes where life is not so hard, kindergartens, playgrounds, moving pictures, and clubs compete with the family as influential factors in the

shaping of the individual's mind and character. Educational training and religious beliefs were once the work of the home. Our fathers went to school only a few days a year for a few years. Now our children may start to nursery school when they are three or four years old and remain in one kind of school or another until, in their twenties, they go out bespectacled and with their heads full of book-learning to get jobs and make a living.

The pattern of family life has not changed so much in recent years in rural districts as in the urban areas. The country home is more isolated than the city home, and for that reason its influence is more intense. The rural family is more integrated and stable than the urban family. Children are under its exclusive influence longer. There are fewer agencies to share and compete with it in the shaping and educating of its children than in the city. Along with other factors of country life, this helps to account for some of the characteristics typical of country people. They are thrifty and self-reliant and orthodox and conservative. When radical movements have developed among the farmers, they have originated in economic pressure and not because the rural mind accepted radical principles. The farmer may enlist in such movements from self-interest, but he is indifferent to all other radical causes and abandons his own movement when times get better. Not only does the influence of the rural family make itself felt during the formative years of the child's life, but family ties often remain through maturity. When the children grow up and marry, they frequently settle within a short distance of one another and act together on community matters instead of scattering to the four winds as city fledglings do when they leave the nest. Such clannish ties play an important part in the formation of public opinion in the neighborhood. Even in these days of

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consolidated schools and paved roads, the country home retains a large part of its old position as monarch of the lives of its members.

The influence of the home on political beliefs is of particular interest to students of public affairs. A few years ago Charles E. Merriam estimated that 75 per cent of the members of our political parties are members by heredity. Certainly it is true that party opinions are often fixed at an early age. Children hear political viewpoints expressed in the home, sometimes with pungent vigor. And when the little boy ten or twelve years old goes with his father to political meetings, he begins to feel the lure of the game and the heat and loyalty that go with it. Boys who went with proud fathers to hear William Jennings Bryan and shake hands with him thirty years ago are now enthusiastically voting the Democratic ticket. The ten-year-olds form political allegiances that can be shaken off only with difficulty. In later years they may rationalize their loyalty, but they do not change it, unless under unusual pressure.

If the public is to be sound, if its opinions on politics and morals and what not are to be sound, the foundation must be laid first of all in the homes. Louis Bromfield says in his preface to *The Farm* that he wrote it to picture a way of life in which integrity and idealism were prime characteristics. Those are qualities that are developed primarily in the family, if at all. If they are not developed in the family, society rots at the core. But integrity and idealism are not enough to make a home ideal. No home can assure the finest development of its members without some measure of economic security. The uneasiness and the undercurrent fear that economic insecurity carries with it lead to a discontent that may be corrosive of mind and spirit. And hungry people are dangerous to the established order, no matter what it is. Homes with economic security to provide

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the physical base, and character that develops integrity and idealism, are homes on which democracy can rely for a solid foundation.

No discussion of the opinions of the public or of the individuals who compose it can leave out of consideration the influence of religion and the organized church. Mohammed once said, "If a man find himself with bread in both hands he should exchange one loaf for some flowers of the narcissus, since the loaf feeds the body, indeed, but the flowers feed the soul." Normal men have never been content to live by bread alone. Always they have sought for the flowers that feed the soul.

Christianity, the religion of the Western world, has had two aspects. On the one hand, it offered to finite man harmonious connection with the infinite. Comfort comes with the belief that there is a God who neither slumbers nor sleeps and that human hands, so often helpless, may "Touch God's right hand in the darkness" and be lifted up and strengthened. The other aspect of Christianity is its social teaching and its influence on morality. Woodrow Wilson considered this so important that one of the last things he wrote was ". . . our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the spirit of Christ and being made free and happy by the practices which spring out of that spirit."

Like the family, the church has changed in nature, and in recent years has suffered a decline in its power to influence the individual. Whether for better or for worse, the type of religion which was common in pioneer America is now almost extinct. Especially in the Protestant church, emphasis has been placed increasingly on the social implications of religion where the church has remained dynamic, and on vacuous platitudes where it has drifted with the tide. It would be a mistake, however, to emphasize too much the decline of the church's

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power in individual lives. Man has a tendency to create God in his own image, to make him Prince of Peace or God of War, compassionate Friend or stern Judge, as the point of view differs with the variations in human character. The poor are comforted by the belief that all men are equal in the eyes of God, while the rich find congenial the doctrine that the underprivileged should endure uncomplainingly the trials of this life, content to wait for their reward in the next one. But who can doubt that the church has been a powerful factor in shaping the character of many people, both rich and poor? The church still has a strong appeal because of man's instinctively religious nature and because of the authority that he is inclined to ascribe to his religious leaders. Sunday schools furnish most of the religious training that many children receive, and the Sunday schools work on plastic minds. Although it is true that the average church member does not attend the church's services very regularly, he retains a considerable amount of loyalty to it and believes in the beneficence of its work. He would not want to live or die without it, and he wants his children to feel its influence.

The forces of Christianity do not always speak with a united voice. In recent years the Protestant church has been divided by a struggle between fundamentalism and modernism which has at times been exceedingly bitter, but the greatest division among the Christians of the United States is still, as it has always been, the division between Catholics and Protestants. The Catholic church finds its greatest strength in the city populations, especially among immigrant groups. The Protestants are strongest in rural areas and among the population of older American stock. People in the rural districts are inclined to be suspicious of the big cities, with their "foreign" elements and their Catholics and their supposedly sinful ways of life. When one of the major parties a few years ago nominated for the

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Presidency a man who was at the same time a Catholic and a "wet" and the product of a great eastern city, it was too much for rural America to accept. Although these factors were not the only ones entering into his defeat, they were responsible for turning it into a rout. Had the nominee been a dry Catholic from a less iniquitous district, such as the late Senator Thomas Walsh of Montana, there would have been little objection to him; but combine Catholicism with beer and the sidewalks of New York, and the result is a brew that the Middle West and the South cannot swallow. But the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism run deeper than mere surface divergence and suspicion. As various writers have suggested, Protestantism is democratic and reformist and nationalist, whereas Catholicism is authoritarian and non-reformist and international.

The student of public affairs is particularly interested in the teachings of the church on social matters. The viewpoint of the Catholic church has been essentially conservative. Although the Church speaks with one voice on fundamental outlines of policy and doctrine, there is wide variation in the attitudes of its leaders in the United States toward social problems. On some matters, the variation is almost as great as among Protestant leaders. Of the socially liberal Catholic leaders, probably none has won more esteem among progressives both inside and outside his church than Dr. John A. Ryan. He has declared that the laborer has a natural right to a living wage and that the community is responsible for the realization of the wage rights of its members. His long career as teacher and writer and his active support of the interests of working men have demonstrated that this doctrine is no theoretical abstraction with him. On the other hand, there have been outstanding leaders in positions of power and influence in the church in America whose attitude on social and economic questions has

seemed to be as reactionary as the most unregenerate beneficiary of special privilege could desire.

In regard to communism, there is no lack of unity in the expressed opinion of Catholic leaders. The Pope has made it clear that he considers the spread of "atheistic communism" as one of the most menacing of all threats to the civilization and the religion of the Western world. His belief has led him to organize and direct a world-wide campaign against communism. *The New York Times* of December 14, 1936, contained a dispatch from Vatican City that stated, "Thousands of speeches, lectures and debates are given daily in all corners of the world by Catholic priests and laymen, Vatican authorities said today. An impressive number of books, booklets, weekly newspapers and reviews are coming out every day, with a large portion of their columns 'illustrating the dangers and ambushes of the Communist program and propaganda.'" On December 20, with reference to the Pope's campaign, a *Times* dispatch said, "He relies on the episcopacy and the clergy to bring his words to the notice of masses and on the members of the Catholic Action to spread them by means of lectures and other propaganda. In this way he hopes gradually to build up a sufficient force of public opinion in all countries to force governments to take measures to resist communism's advance."

So great is the Catholic hostility to communism that late in 1935, in a pastoral letter signed by the cardinals and bishops of Germany, the support of the Church was pledged to Chancellor Hitler's crusade against Bolshevism. However, when the Nazis showed a tendency to pursue an intransigent policy against the church, Catholic leaders struck back. In the United States, in the midst of the political campaign of 1936, an outstanding Catholic liberal, who was supporting President Roosevelt's candidacy, declared that if forced to choose between communism and fascism, he would take fascism. This attitude has

been puzzling to non-Catholic liberals. Fascism, especially in its German form, has shown itself just as un-Christian as communism. The explanation of the Catholic attitude lies deep in historical developments of the past and the attitudes that developed along the way. The Church has been a social and economic institution as well as a religious one, and it has generally aligned itself with the forces working to maintain the existing order. Communism has been its historic enemy. Between them there can be no compromise. Their fight is to the death. Fascism is a newer movement. It may harry the Church and embarrass it, but as yet the door is not locked against compromise.

Birth control is another subject on which Catholic leaders follow the conservative pattern. The Pope has from time to time condemned it, and American clerical leaders have followed in his path. In 1925, in a pastoral letter, Cardinal Hayes referred to the propaganda for the dissemination of birth control as shocking to "the moral sense of every true follower of Christ." And he went on to say, "How much more advanced in true social progress would be the advocates of Birth Control, if, instead of interfering with the fountain of human life, they would seek the ideal of Christian Charity, which by realizing in due course of time, better housing and living conditions, hopes to provide a proper home for every child, and children for every home." The practice of birth control has become so widespread and the idea has gained such acceptance that some Protestant church organizations have given it their approval, but thus far the Catholic church stands firmly against it. The stand taken by the church on divorce has been similarly uncompromising.

Protestant leaders have shown an active interest in many social and economic problems. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick revealed the attitude of the social liberals among them when he

said in February, 1937, "Whether one thinks of our economic life where in this powerful and really opulent country it is so shamefully difficult to drive out even an obvious abomination like child labor, whether one thinks of those terrible underprivileged areas of iniquity in our great cities from which comes the great mass of our criminality, whether one thinks of the failure of our home life, the inadequacy of our churches in dealing with education, we must be deeply and penitently dissatisfied."

Organized expression for this school of thought is provided by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. The Council was established in 1908 to secure a larger combined influence for the churches in matters "affecting the moral and social condition of the people." It works to promote tolerance, friendship, social justice, better race relations, disarmament, and the abolition of war. The influence of the Federal Council is important, but its point of view is not altogether typical of Protestantism. It represents the social "left-wing" of the Protestant churches.

Protestant clergymen have shown hostility to communism, but they tend to condemn fascism with equal vigor. A leading Presbyterian minister of Newark, in October, 1936, referred to communism and fascism as "two tremendous false faiths" that "not only are struggling with each other in life and death combat but unitedly assailing the Christian faith." A few days later, Dr. George A. Buttrick, Presbyterian minister of New York City, referred to "the lock-step of communism and fascism," while one of his Methodist colleagues declared that the dictatorships would fail because they were "trying to turn the clock of evolution backward." In a report to the New York Synod of the Presbyterian Church, a committee on social service warned against the "Fascist mood" that caused interference with free speech in the United States.

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Protestant churches have taken a strong internationalist and anti-war stand in recent years. In 1936, the Pan American Congress of Episcopal Bishops adopted a resolution voicing their conviction "that the principles on which the League of Nations is founded are essential to a peacefully ordered world." This viewpoint is typical of church leaders. A number of the denominations have also voiced strong condemnation of the ancient institution of war, and ministers have encouraged the development of strong pacifist sentiment among their membership and their children. A large number of ministers have pledged themselves never to support another war.

The church has made its influence felt in the enactment and enforcement of laws by the political authorities ever since there was a church. The church no longer controls legislation as did the Catholics during the medieval period, or John Calvin in Geneva. We no longer have statutes enacted such as that in colonial Virginia which provided that, "Every man shall repair in the morning to the divine service and sermons preached upon the Sabbath day, and in the afternoon to divine service, and catechising, upon pain for the first fault to lose their provision and the allowance for the whole week following; for the second to lose the said allowance and also be whipt; and for the third to suffer death." But the church is still a potent power in legislative halls. National prohibition represented a great triumph for the forces of organized Protestantism. In its repeal they went down to defeat, but there are indications that they may rise again to confound their enemies. Strict laws against the dissemination of birth-control information, and against the granting of divorces, bear witness to Catholic strength in a number of states. Laws against the teaching of evolution in the public schools are monuments to the power of Protestant fundamentalism in Southern states. The church in recent years has lost influence over the lives and character of individual men,

but along some lines it has gained power as an organized political force.

Critics of the modern church have suggested that it has lost the dynamic power that once characterized it because it has sought the world's approbation instead of denouncing its sins. Many church leaders have created great business organizations and built big buildings and tried to enlarge their membership and ingratiate themselves with the people by giving the church the current color of the public character. A few years ago, one of the leading protestant churches of Ann Arbor advertised a speaker in the *Michigan Daily* (of the University of Michigan) in these terms, " 'Bill' is not a minister. He says he wishes he were, but—he's an old foot-ball player, out-door enthusiast, mountain climber, pioneer motor highway promoter, scenic photographer, and a lot of things. 'Bill' used to be a partner in one of the largest business concerns in the South-west; but he sold out in order to devote himself to the 'business' of the Church." That was some churchman's conception of the kind of advertisement that would attract university students to his church. There is nothing morally wrong with it, but one may wonder what kind of contribution, either spiritual or social, "Bill" would make to the souls and minds of those attracted. The critics suggest that the church should revive its vigor by trying to redeem men instead of cultivating their weaknesses. The church has suffered a loss of prestige in some quarters because its leaders supported the last war, but it is not certain that it would not have suffered equally had it unalterably opposed the war. When forced to choose between a policy of what appears to be firm allegiance to the teachings of the founder of their faith and a course of compromise with forces that seem almost unconquerable, the churchmen face a difficult task.

As the influence of the home and the church over individuals has been gradually decreasing in recent years, the opportunity

of the schools to extend their influence has been steadily growing. The work of educating the individual has been increasingly entrusted to the schools.

In 1786, Thomas Jefferson wrote to a Virginia friend, "I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised, for the preservation of freedom and happiness." Since that time, the system of free public schools for the diffusion of knowledge among the people has been steadily expanded and, in many respects, improved. Within the last fifty years, notable advance has been made in the establishment of better equipped elementary schools, and in the increased number of free secondary schools, teachers' colleges, and state universities. Opportunities for higher education have been made accessible to people from all classes of society.

The United States is almost unique among the nations of the world in that it has long had an educational system that provides a single line of progress from the primary school to the university. In European countries, sharp class distinctions have been reflected in educational systems. A dual school system existed; one branch, for the upper class, leading to the university; the other, for the common people, providing only limited opportunities and *not* leading to the university. Since the World War, a number of European countries have reorganized their educational programs on a more democratic basis. The fact that the United States has had a democratic system from very early times was due in large measure to the frontier conditions that prevailed when the foundations for education were being laid. Among the frontiersmen, democracy was almost a part of the air they breathed. The democracy of educational opportunity must without doubt have contributed to the American psychology that has made it difficult for communism and

socialism to make much headway in the United States. Laborers have not felt themselves an oppressed proletariat. They have always been able to send their children to school with the hope that they might rise to new heights and perhaps become the capitalists of the next generation.

Schools have probably contributed more to the average individual's stock of ideas in the United States than in most other countries. Education has been much emphasized, and because the learning to be gained in schools has carried with it a sanction of authoritativeness, it has been of vital importance in shaping the minds of children of all kinds and conditions of men who have come to seek it when their minds were plastic. The public schools have occupied a strategic position for developing the character and attitudes in young people that have formed the basis for the opinions of their maturity.

The first clue to the kind of work being done by the schools is to be found in the textbooks that they use. During most of the nineteenth century, readers were the only textbooks used in the common schools that had to do directly with the formation of character. And among all the books in the history of American education, no other has ever exerted so much influence as McGuffey's readers. The men who have been the leaders in American life for the last three generations grew up on these readers. In order to substantiate his high estimate of McGuffey's influence, Mark Sullivan presents the testimony of the late Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana, former Governor Lowden of Illinois, ex-Supreme Court Justice John H. Clark, and other prominent Americans as to the lasting effects of the readers on their minds.¹ And the influence was not confined to the minds of the great. Since the first ones were published in 1836, the readers have been published in more than a hundred and

¹ *Our Times*, Vol. II, 13, 14. Charles Scribner's Sons.

fifty editions, and 120,000,000 copies have been issued. The publishers do not exaggerate when they say, "Their wholesome maxims and precepts, interwoven with the lives of millions of people, have become household classics." The lessons taught orthodox religion and the virtues of thrift, honesty, kindness, politeness, and self control. These readers constituted the main source of literature in the education of millions of average Americans, and for that reason were the source of many of the viewpoints and moral standards that they held in common. Some of the characteristics that have differentiated Americans from other peoples are no doubt, partially at least, a monument to the readers that William Holmes McGuffey wrote.

The other textbooks used in the period when McGuffey readers were in vogue were as orthodox in tone as the famous readers. The histories were usually written as though they had taken for their text John Clark Ridpath's statement that the result of the American Revolution was "the grandest Republican government in the world." The British were the villains of the drama in which a little group of oppressed but sturdy patriots whipped the British Empire. In the words of John Frost's *A History of the United States*, "That men, who had always been accustomed to the rights of freedom and self-government, should descend from their exalted rank to the degradation of slavery—that they should abandon every thing which they held dear, and become the crouching subjects of a suspected, despised, and oppressed dependency of the British empire, was not to be expected. The colonists spurned the thought of such degradation." The geographies were equally patriotic. The inhabitants of the United States were pictured as the freest and most enlightened people in the world. On the subject of religion, a typical nineteenth century geography said that Mohammedanism was "a confused mixture of grossly false ideas and precepts," whereas Christianity was said to be "the only

system which elevates man to a true sense of his moral relations, and adds to his happiness." ²

During the World War, the force of patriotism made itself felt in almost every phase of American life, including the schools from the elementary grades up to and through the universities. The teaching of the German language was generally barred. Special books full of patriotic propaganda were introduced, and in various other ways the schools were made part of the war machine. And the interest of the patriots in education continued after the war was over. It was discovered that the modern textbooks were not written with the same fervent bias that had characterized those of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Scholarly historians had written histories more objectively than their predecessors of the previous generation. Notably the traditional accounts of American relations with Great Britain in the Revolutionary period had given way to a more restrained treatment of the subject. The critics pounced upon this lapse from orthodoxy.

At first the agitation against textbooks was mainly anti-British.³ A newspaper syndicate printed in 1921 a series of articles dealing with the subject, which were later printed in pamphlet form under the title, "Treason to American Tradition; The Spirit of Benedict Arnold Reincarnated." The pamphlet was widely distributed under the auspices of the Sons of the American Revolution in the State of California. To further the work, a "Patriotic League for the Preservation of American History" was formed. Various patriotic organizations passed heated resolutions and applied pressure to school boards and legislators. Professional vote-getters saw a chance to stir the emotions of the people with high sounding words of patriot-

² Mark Sullivan, *Our Times*, Vol II, 92. Charles Scribner's Sons.

³ Harold Underwood Faulkner, "Perverved American History," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLII (1926), 338-9.

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ism and declamations against the insidious influence of alien enemies. Mayor William Hale Thompson of Chicago discovered "pro-British propaganda" in the schools of that city and appealed to the electorate with the promise that he would "bust King George on the snoot."

One of the scholars who was accused of dealing too leniently with the British was the late Professor C. H. Van Tyne, of the University of Michigan. Speaking before an Ann Arbor audience, he once told that he had been criticized for writing in one of his books of the battle of Bunker Hill that "after being twice repulsed the British gallantly reformed and charged again." And he added, with a touch of sarcasm in his voice, "I suppose I should have said, 'After being twice repulsed the cowardly British reformed and charged again.'"

Interested individuals and organizations did not stop with negative criticism, nor did all of them content themselves with the happy thought of "busting His Britannic Majesty's snoot." Theories were advanced as to what textbooks should contain and by whom they should be written. A New York City Public School Committee suggested that history should be taught in the elementary grades "not as ends, but as means to ends; such as love for law and order, respect for constituted authority, appreciation of the institutions of the country and its ideals."⁴ In 1922, the Sons of the American Revolution officially expressed their "deep interest in the subject of textbooks on American history" used in the public schools and protested "against the use of any textbook that lauds the Tories and censures the patriots, which maligns the memory of any of the great men of the Revolutionary period, or undervalues the services and sacrifices by which our national independence was won." American history textbooks, they said, should "portray in colorful outline the heroic incidents of the struggle and teach the price-

⁴ Harold Underwood Faulkner, "Perverved American History," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLII (1926), 344.

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less value of the institutions which we inherit from our forefathers." The Committee on Patriotic Education was instructed to take measures to see that "all textbooks objectionable on the above grounds" were eliminated from the schools. Other organizations that showed an interest in American history in the schools and passed resolutions protesting its "un-American" trend were: the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic, various posts of the American Legion, the New Jersey Council of the Junior Order of Mechanics, and the New Jersey Grand Lodge of the Knights of Pythias.⁵

Realizing that teachers as well as textbooks influence the minds of pupils in the schools, various organizations became actively interested in purging the schools of the kind of teachers who were, from their point of view, undesirable. Agitation for statutes requiring teachers to swear allegiance to the Constitution and the established order was one of the most important manifestations of this movement. Educators from all sections of the United States have generally condemned the teachers' oath laws and the spirit back of them. In an address to alumni of Johns Hopkins University in October, 1936, Dr. Isaiah Bowman, president of the university, was reported as having condemned the teachers' oath movement as a threat to the independence of American universities and as dangerous to the nation as a whole. He urged his hearers to work against such a movement or any similar invasion of free thought.⁶ A month later, Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, condemned teachers' oath laws as having "added insult to injury," and also said, "Nor can we hope for adequate teachers as long as teachers may be hired and fired for any rea-

⁵Harold Underwood Faulkner, "Perverted American History," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLII (1926), 338-40.

⁶*New York Times*, October 17, 1936.

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son or for no reason at all. . . . The greatest danger to education in America is the attempt, under the guise of patriotism, to suppress freedom of teaching, inquiry and discussion. No American ever breathed who cannot and will not tell any educator or any group of educators exactly what and how to teach. But if this deplorable national characteristic is allowed to run riot, nobody with any intelligence or independence will join the ranks of the teaching profession.”⁷

The American Association of University Professors in their 1936 convention condemned teachers’ oath laws, then in force in twenty-two states, as being legally futile and because they “can easily be used as an instrument to promote intolerance, restrict our civil liberties and the freedom of the teacher and to accentuate propaganda against democratic idealism.” The committee reporting the resolution upheld the teaching of American principles, but the chairman pointed out that very grave abuses might arise from the differing conceptions of “American principles,” and pressure from interested groups might lead to unjust dismissals of teachers.⁸

The climax of teachers’ oath laws was reached in 1935, when Congress passed an appropriation bill containing a “red rider.” The provision was that “no part of any appropriation for the public schools (in the District of Columbia) shall be available for the payment of the salary of any person teaching or advocating communism.” Under this law, the Comptroller General required every officer, teacher, clerk, and custodian in the public schools of the District to make, as a condition of receiving his salary, a declaration that he had not taught or advocated communism. The officers and teachers, who were paid monthly, were required to make such a declaration at the end of each month. Clerks and custodians, who were paid twice a month,

⁷ *New York Times*, November 16, 1936.

⁸ *Ibid.*, December 30, 1936.

were required to make such a declaration twice a month, preceding their payday on the fifteenth of the month and the final day of the month.

In 1937, when the repeal of the "red rider" was being considered in the Senate, no one defended the provisions as it had been interpreted by the Comptroller General.⁹ In the course of the discussion Senator Josh Lee, of Oklahoma, said, "I do not favor communism, I do not favor immorality; but I do not believe we can legislate either morality or patriotism into anybody. I think we must leave this matter to the school boards and superintendents; in other words to those who hire the teachers. . . . There is a strong presumption that no teacher in the United States will teach or advocate communism; and for us to repeal this rider . . . which is so offensive to the teaching profession, will in no way imply that we thereby favor the teaching or advocating of communism, but will rather state to the Nation that we take it for granted that no teacher . . . will be so disloyal as to advocate a political doctrine so diametrically opposed to our form of government as is communism."

Patriotic organizations have not been the only outside groups that have tried to influence what was taught in the schools. Business interests have on occasion spread their propaganda by influencing textbooks and teachers.¹⁰ In 1924, the Illinois and Missouri committees on Public Utility Information (maintained by the public utilities) completed elaborate surveys of the textbooks used in the schools of those states. The texts were classified according to their desirability from the public utility viewpoint, and objectionable passages were pointed out. Books favoring municipal ownership, mentioning the lack of competition with monopolies, or political corruption of corpora-

⁹ See *Congressional Record*, 75th Congress, 1st Session, February 17, 1937, 1567-72.

¹⁰ See Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace*, 309-29. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.; Peter Odegard, *The American Public Mind*, 90-2. Columbia University Press; *Senate Document* 92, part 3, 70th Congress, 1st session.

tions, were found objectionable. The information was sent to public utility officials all over the country. A national survey of texts was then made. Publishers and authors were asked to revise certain ones, and in many cases complied with the request. The National Electric Light Association was active in bringing pressure to bear upon publishers to eliminate undesirable books, some of which were considered "poisonous" from the standpoint of the utilities. At least one publisher agreed to allow the Association to examine manuscripts before publication and make suggestions.

Teachers who were engaged in writing textbooks dealing in any way with utilities were offered information compiled by the utilities' committees, and the utilities offered to buy five thousand copies of some approved texts. Such attractive seduction was too much for a number of authors to resist. The practice became so objectionable that the American Association of University Professors adopted a resolution declaring that "No university professor who receives a fee or other compensation from any person or association interested in public discussion or testimony respecting a particular question of public importance should take part in such discussion, or furnish such testimony, without making public the fact that he receives a compensation therefor, and the name of the person or association paying his said compensation."¹¹ Making authors their mouthpieces was not the only use made of teachers by the utilities. "Certain educators" were sent around to make speeches before colleges and universities on such subjects as "Government and Business." One of the propaganda directors wrote to another, "We try to keep away from announcing the talk to have anything to do with public utilities. . . ."¹²

¹¹ *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, February, 1931, 140.

¹² Quoted in Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace*, 310. D. Appleton-Century Co.

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Bulletins and pamphlets were prepared for the use of high schools and the upper grades. The director of the Illinois Committee on Public Utility Information declared that three-fourths of the high schools of Illinois used literature prepared by the committee. The Ohio committee distributed 190,000 copies of a textbook called *Aladdins of Industry* to students in the schools of Ohio. A *Public Utilities Catechism* was put into 70 per cent of the lower schools in Connecticut. Similar work was carried on in many other states. The literature distributed by the utilities contained a mixture of useful facts and partisan propaganda. Its purpose was to create an opinion that government ownership of utilities was uneconomical and unwise and that prevailing regulation of the industry prevented it from making a real profit.

The public utilities have carried on the most far-flung and best-financed campaign of any outside group. But others have tried in various ways from time to time to establish in the minds of school pupils a bias in their favor. In 1930, a committee of the Wisconsin Teachers' Association reported that attempts were made to secure a hearing through the schools by agencies favoring military training, chain stores, world peace, safety, thrift, kindness to animals, patriotism, private ownership of utilities, prohibition, Negro rights, the League of Nations, safer highways, and music cultivation, and opposing chain stores. The evidence thus shows that attempts are made not only by private interests to exploit the schools for their own profit, but also by various groups who seek to have accepted particular doctrines for which they are crusading, sometimes without any intent to reap financial gain for themselves.

The propaganda movement should be kept under constant scrutiny by those interested in education, for if it is allowed unchecked access to the schools, it will destroy their power to really educate people. The child goes to school with plastic

mind, lacking knowledge and the power of critical judgment. The teacher has authority. As one five-year-old boy, home from kindergarten, expressed it to a critical parent, "*Teachers know more than people.*" The printed page has authority. The field is fertile for cultivation by propagandists if they are allowed to enter. The schools can be turned into one of the most effective propaganda agencies in society. Dictators know that, and control the schools in their countries in order to make sure that young minds will be indoctrinated with properly perverted tenets. The *educator's* mind is open on all subjects. He tries to present different viewpoints and develop in his pupils the faculty of critical thinking. If he becomes the tool of propagandists representing special interests, he becomes an anti-educational force. If propagandists are allowed to interfere with the work of educators, they destroy the possibility of healthy education.

American schools, both public schools and colleges, for a long time have generally been under the control of boards composed largely of business men. Most of the older institutions of higher learning were founded by churchmen and controlled by the clergy. Their primary purpose was the training of candidates for the ministry. But the purpose of the colleges has changed and, as a matter of expediency, business men have long since replaced the clergy on the governing boards. The modern college or university is either an institution that has large financial interests to be looked after or it is striving very hard to acquire large financial interests. In either case, business men are considered valuable assets on the board of trustees.

Control by business men has notably influenced the nature of the schools, especially the colleges and universities. Business men as a class are conservative in their social and economic beliefs, and inclined to stress business efficiency. This spirit carried into the management of colleges and universities has had

an important effect on the kind of teachers employed and given advancement. The man who was sound in his economic views, the man who could make good speeches to service clubs and other community organizations, the man who could write books and turn them out with the regularity of a good alarm clock—the successful advertisers were the men who got the appointments and promotions, with security on the payroll. Where such a standard has been the controlling factor, for teachers who did not naturally come in such a class, the result has been insecurity of tenure, with its unwholesome psychological effect and its destruction of intellectual freedom.

Just how successfully the universities are going about their work of educating men and women is a matter about which there is considerable disagreement. George Bernard Shaw said a few years ago, "I have a very strong opinion that every university on the face of the earth ought to be leveled to the ground and its foundations sowed with salt." And he went on to suggest that to keep civilization together "people of more or less original minds" are required. But "the university," he said, "turns out people with artificial minds."¹³ In 1934, when the president of a middle western state university had been subjected to a bitter attack by one of his critics, a distinguished citizen of the state wrote, "The faults he finds are really the president's qualifications for his office in making education fit for the unfit for education." And a little later, "A university president's job it is too, to prevent education from becoming realistic enough to look for the lamb inside the lion."¹⁴ Dr. Glenn Frank once welcomed a group of new students to the University of Wisconsin with a speech in which he said, "Universities are conservative, not because conservative interests are strangling them with subsidies, but simply because universities are

¹³ *New York Times*, March 26, 1933.

¹⁴ *Capital Times*, February 6, 1934.

formal institutions, and formal institutions always lag behind the demands of a changing society. . . . Our doctrines and our institutions are always behind the actual movement of our life." But he continued by saying that many of those in the university were "honestly trying to check this humanity-wide tendency of the formal institution to lag behind the changing needs of a changing society."¹⁵

In the United States, educational institutions have long been not only democratic in the opportunities that they provided but also under a constant and critical scrutiny by the public. In Europe, educational institutions have generally enjoyed great prestige either because of their connection with the central government or because of their long-established traditions. American public schools have been controlled by local authorities chosen by the people. As a result, the people have felt free to criticize them. Both good and evil results have followed. Anti-educational meddlers have exerted a baneful influence when they could have their way. Propagandists have used the schools to serve their own ends. Emphasis has sometimes been placed on activities which should be merely minor incidentals of education. But the sensitiveness of the schools to the currents of public opinion has led the schoolmen to be constantly on the alert to improve their methods and has kept them aware of the fact that their business is to serve the people.

The people control the schools in the United States. When enlightenment triumphs over darkness among them, the victory is reflected in the education of the times, and the schools in turn go on more vigorously with the education of the individuals who compose the public. If they do their work well, the citizens whom they train will be better equipped to take part in public affairs. Good schools are both a cause and a result of

¹⁵ *Daily Cardinal*, September 27, 1930.

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intelligent public opinion. They reflect credit on the present, and at least partially guarantee the future.

A state may go on for years on the strength of the achievements of its founders, but when times of crisis come, the character of its people must be built on solid foundations if it is to survive. In such times, their judgments must be rational, far sighted, and considerate of the common welfare if they are to carry their institutions safely through the storm. Whether they will succeed or not depends upon the work already done by the home and the church and the school.

IV

PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP

THE MANUFACTURE and manipulation of opinion has become an important factor in modern life. Where men once depended upon physical force or haphazard appeals to secure a following, they now proceed in systematic fashion to besiege the minds of men with propaganda. The deliberate manufacture of popular opinion has come to be recognized as a science, and has received careful and interesting study in a number of recent books written by both practitioners and scholars.

Students of propaganda have formulated various definitions of the term, but these definitions are of only three main types. One group of writers define propaganda simply as an attempt to mold the thinking of others. Another group define it as an attempt to influence the thinking of others by presenting half-truths or falsehoods. A good example of this type of definition is the one given by Calvin Coolidge when he said, "Propaganda seeks to present part of the facts, to distort their relations, and to force conclusions which could not be drawn from a complete and candid survey of all the facts."¹ Other students of the subject offer more complicated, and sometimes narrower, definitions. A good example of this type is the one given by Professor Frederick E. Lumley in the following words: "*Propaganda is promotion which is veiled in one way or another as to (1) its origin or sources, (2) the interests involved, (3) the methods employed, (4) the content spread, and (5) the results accruing*

¹ Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace*, 34. D. Appleton-Century Co.

to the victims—any one, any two, any three, any four, or *all five*.”²

Professor Lumley and many other writers are inclined to give propaganda an evil connotation, and their attitude is one that has become common since the World War. But in order to be most accurate in our thinking, we should remember that propaganda is not necessarily evil. It may be a perfectly legitimate form of activity. There may be propaganda for the good life as well as for sinister purposes. With this in mind, we may define propaganda as information spread, or action taken, for the purpose of converting people to a particular principle. In actual practice, the propagandist usually presents only one side of the case, only part of the facts, or perhaps actually lies, because that seems to him the most effective way to establish certain attitudes or opinions in the minds of the people whom he wishes to convert.

Propaganda is essentially different from education. The purpose of education is to develop an individual who will maintain suspended judgment until the evidence is all in and to give him a range of knowledge that will enlarge the outlook of his mind. The purpose of propaganda is to get the individual to make a certain judgment whether the evidence is partial or complete, or to build attitudes that will lead him to jump to certain conclusions without paying much attention to the evidence. Those who would substitute propaganda for education would do so either because they are afraid their cause will not stand the light of reason or because they lack faith in the intelligence of the people.

The people who compose the public are unorganized and not always on guard against those who would mislead or take advantage of them. If propaganda is thorough enough, standard type attitudes may be created that are favorable to special in-

² Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace*, 44. D. Appleton-Century Co.

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terests and contrary to the general welfare. And propagandists are more often working for special interests than for the general welfare.

When we turn to the methods of propaganda, we find that the promoters use the "familiar channels of communication."³ Which channel will be most effective varies from time to time. In one period, the most effective may be the public meeting, in another the newspaper, in another the radio. Instrumentalities of one kind or another exist, which make it possible in the modern world to reach all of the people if the promoter has the price.

The Federal Trade Commission's investigation of public utility corporations in 1928 revealed the propaganda methods considered most effective by the utilities. The director of the Tennessee Bureau of Public Utility Information was quoted as saying: "The bureau in Tennessee regards public speaking as a thing of secondary importance in their program. They place first importance on contact with the newspapers, the newspaper editors, and the people in the counties. This, for the past two years, has been their goal. Call the country editor by his first name and slap him on the back. Public speaking is of second importance, and contact with the schools is third."⁴ Utility propagandists throughout the United States used various methods at the same time. Information was sent to the newspapers to be used either editorially or as news. Experienced speakers were sent to luncheon clubs and other clubs and to schools and colleges. Pamphlets and textbooks were prepared for use in the schools, and were widely distributed, and some professors were subsidized.

Since 1933, the National Association of Manufacturers has been carrying on an extensive campaign to make public opinion

³ Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace*, 109. D. Appleton-Century Co.

⁴ *Senate Document* 92, part 3, 70th Congress, 1st Session, 516, 517.

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more conservative in its attitude toward the system of private enterprise. It has been, said the chairman of their Public Relations Committee in 1936, "a carefully planned, systematic program which has included every method of contact with the public."⁵ The Association undertook the task "of reshaping the thinking of some 128,000,000 people on a vital subject." First in their program was the establishment of a press service which, in 1936, reached 5,300 weekly newspapers and two hundred and sixty daily papers. This service carried both editorial and news material to cities and towns in every state. A cartoon service known as "Uncle Abner Says" was established and is used by more than three hundred papers with a circulation of 2,000,000 readers. Foreign language papers are sent material in their own languages. Motion pictures and the radio are also used extensively. Professional speakers have been provided for civic meetings and promotion men sent out in advance to work up such meetings. Employee information service, "informative letters to stockholders," outdoor advertising, and pamphlets to be sent to "leaders of public opinion in all walks of life" are other methods used to reach the public. It is no wonder that the Chairman of the Public Relations Committee said, "Frankly, I am always a bit breathless whenever I consider this N.A.M. public relations program—but breathless for another reason. I am always amazed at its completeness and the way in which it reaches into every section of the country and all strata of society."⁶

The form of the message has an important bearing on its effectiveness. If propaganda is to be carried through a movie, it must be a movie that will appeal to the audience; if through a book, the book must appeal to readers; if through a song, it

⁵ "Industry Must Speak," address of Mr. Harry A. Bullis before the annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers, December 8, 1936.

⁶ *Ibid.*

must be a song that will catch the hearers. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is an historic example of a book that was outstandingly successful in achieving its purpose—so successful, in fact, that Secretary Seward is supposed to have referred to its author as “the little woman who caused the Civil War.” *The Nine Old Men* is a modern book of propaganda that is so highly interesting that it became a best seller. Propaganda is often much more interesting than material presented with an educational end in view.

Slogans are important for those who are missionaries to the public mind. Hitler has said that “the receptive ability of the masses is very limited, their understanding small; on the other hand, they have a great power of forgetting. This being so, all effective propaganda must be confined to very few points which must be brought out in the form of slogans until the very last man is enabled to comprehend what is meant by any slogan.” In other words, what the propagandist wants to do is to build a picture in the mind of the individual with a certain label or slogan attached to it. Then when the slogan is waved at him, he will see the picture and act accordingly.

Much of the power of propaganda is derived from the common failure of people to recognize it as such. The favorite devices of the propagandist are designed to arouse the emotions rather than to stimulate critical thinking. “Name calling” is a commonly used device of this type. Bad names are given to those the propagandist would have us condemn, good names to those he would have us favor. Opponents of a big navy are called “pacifists” by the advocates of preparedness, the conservative is labeled a “Tory” or “economic royalist” by progressive orators, whereas the progressive is a “Communist” or a “demagogue” to the propagandists of conservatism. “Glittering generalities” is another frequently used device. We are told that “the American system is threatened,” and are lured with such attractive phrases as “social justice,” “the more abundant life,”

and "economic freedom." Propagandists may also give their cause prestige by the device of transferring to it the prestige of a respected name or symbol as, for instance, when they associate George Washington or Uncle Sam or the American flag with the cause they are promoting. The transfer of prestige from a highly successful individual is a variation of the same technique. The testimonial of a millionaire industrialist on religion, morals, or politics, may be given widespread publicity. Campaign managers publicize the fact that famous movie stars or prize fighters have endorsed their candidate. The use of "bandwagon psychology" is another favorite device of political propagandists. Campaign managers, knowing the human tendency to follow the crowd, invariably predict victory for their candidates. Through the maze of such artifices, the mind of the average citizen more or less innocently threads its way to the formation of opinions that merge in the stream of public opinion.

In addition to making use of the foregoing devices, which are inherently propagandist in nature, the disseminator of propaganda may utilize any of the well-known devices for influencing people. Repetition is an elementary device often used by the propagandist to impress his message on the public mind. The practical significance of this principle is illustrated by the statement of the chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the National Association of Manufacturers, "Week after week the N.A.M. program has driven home the facts about industry . . . a carefully planned systematic program which has included every method of contact with the public. Continually hammering home its story, it has operated on the theory that the constant drip, drip of water wears away the hardest stone." If the propagandist is clever, he will select a term or phrase that will catch the attention of the people who hear it and remain in their minds with a certain picture, favorable or unfavorable,

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attached to it. When the promoter is most successful, his slogan will be repeated by other people, and by that means his ideas will be given momentum. Political campaigners know how to make effective use of this device. "We love him for the enemies he has made," "the square deal," "he kept us out of war," "back to normalcy," and President Roosevelt's "forgotten man" and the "New Deal" are examples of words and phrases that have played an important part in political battles of the past. Continued repetition of words or phrases may be used to hammer home an idea to individuals who fail to respond to the first approach, or to reinforce opinions of people who have already been influenced by propaganda.

Oratory is a device for winning public opinion that will probably never go out of date, although its methods change from one period to another. The effective orator, by the charm of his voice and the felicity of his phrases will probably carry more weight for his ideas than they deserve. Professor Clyde R. Miller, of Teachers College, gave three excellent rules for orators when, referring to the opponents of President Roosevelt, he said:

They should have learned . . . that the speech of an effective propagandist should not rank too far above or too far below the speech of average Americans.

Secondly, they should have learned that the propagandist has twice the chance of putting across his point if his voice indicates that he is expressing a reasonable proposition. The great strength of President Roosevelt as a propagandist, for example, lies in his reasonable voice.

Furthermore, the best propagandist never allows himself to get worked up. The angry speaker who shouts converts only those who are already converted.⁷

Showmanship may also be used as an effective device for attracting attention and winning the support of individuals. The

⁷ *New York Times*, April 3, 1937.

old-fashioned medicine man used this device when he parked his car on the public square and had a clown and a pseudo Indian play banjos and otherwise draw a crowd with a free show. The United States Army use it when they send a fleet of airplanes to fly in impressive formations back and forth over different towns and villages for the entertainment of the people, when they want to advertise the Army. Former Mayor William Hale Thompson of Chicago delighted his audiences when, in the midst of a campaign, he had two caged rats brought upon the platform and addressed them by the names of two of his political enemies. Communists make use of the technique on a large scale when they take such trials as those of Sacco and Vanzetti, Mooney and Billings, and the Scottsboro boys and use them to attract attention to abuses and win converts for their cause. In such cases, what would otherwise be nothing more than a miscarriage of justice involving only a few individuals is made not a "show" but a grim and striking drama that wins sympathy for their cause and becomes a symbol of the system they oppose. A dramatization of this kind properly used by communist propagandists is doubtless more effective on the American mind than several tons of books by Karl Marx.

In the 1936 political campaign, the most approved modern methods of showmanship were used, particularly in New York. Sound trucks toured the cities and the rural districts. One person is supposed to have said, "We drag 'em in with the ballyhoo, then give 'em the needle," meaning that crowds were attracted by the sound truck or portable movie theatre, and were then argued at by campaign orators. Caravan tours started in the early morning and covered about three hundred miles a day. In rural communities, where brief stops were made, a record would be put on the machine and a campaign theme song or martial tune would be blasted out at the people. When a real town was reached, the caravan went slowly up and down all

the side streets shouting its message. Then, at some central point, the machine was stopped and the campaigners settled down to business. Usually "The Star Spangled Banner" would be played first, then the platform and microphone were taken out of the trailer and set up. Speakers mounted their portable soap box and took turns at five-minute speeches, while other workers distributed campaign buttons and talked to members of the audience. Then perhaps the meeting closed with the patriotic strains of "America."⁸ Such stunts are very successful in attracting attention, and perhaps in making impressions, regardless of the fact that their appeal is not mainly to the intelligence.

Statistics, cartoons, and pictures are other devices that may be used, whose effectiveness will depend upon the type of message to be conveyed. Statistics always carry an air of authoritativeness, but since they also carry an air of dullness, they are not likely to be as effective as other methods of propaganda. Cartoons may be very effective on many different kinds of people. A good one catches the eye of the casual reader, and the picture and its message remains in his mind after he has forgotten most of the material that he reads or hears. Thomas Nast long ago demonstrated that the cartoon may be a powerful weapon for good or evil, as well as a humorous caricature. Photographs and other pictures may also be used to carry messages more effectively than the printed word. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have distributed widely a picture of a lynched Negro hanging from a tree limb while a group of white spectators, including a small girl, stand around looking at him with various expressions on their faces. People who do not read the literature of the Association will see the picture and remember it for a long time and ponder its message.

Political campaigners distribute pictures of their candidate

⁸ *New York Times*, October 25, 1936.

pitching hay or talking to a man in overalls, or otherwise identifying himself with the common people. In the 1936 campaign, a Republican organization printed an advertisement containing a large picture of a few-days old baby's head with a woebegone expression on its face. Underneath was the statement, "Get to work baby you owe \$432.47!" together with a brief discussion of the heavy taxes and the burden of debt that must be borne by modern taxpayers. The picture was so striking that people would be drawn to read the message who would pass by an ordinary political advertisement containing a discussion of the fiscal affairs of the government. Pictures can be used effectively to attract attention and organize prejudices, and they tend to leave a lasting impression on the mind.

Propagandists appeal to prevailing opinions and prejudices and try to make use of them for their own purposes. One writer has said that "The propagandist is a man who canalizes an already existing stream. In a land where there is no water, he digs in vain."⁹ This idea may be illustrated by a story told by a university student from Milwaukee a few years ago. He said that when he was a small boy at school, something was said about Socialists. "*Of course* none of *us* are Socialists," said the teacher. The little boy raised his hand and said, "I am a Socialist." The teacher replied in a tone indicative of the shock she felt, but also indicative of her assurance that her pupil would see the light, "*Why Julius*, if you had a cow and somebody else didn't have one, you wouldn't want some one to cut your cow half in two and give the other person half, would you?" Such propaganda would doubtless damn socialism in the eyes of the average small scholar, but Julius came from a Socialist home, and it did not change him. However, the theory that the propagandist can only canalize an already existing stream is more

⁹ Aldous Huxley, "Notes on Propaganda," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXIV (1936),

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truly applicable to adults than to children. If the propagandists work on the child when he is young, they may come very close to creating the water that makes the canal—that is, the propagandist may help to build the primary attitudes on which opinions will be based.

Propagandists do not always depend wholly upon frontal assaults to capture the minds of men. They sometimes resort to devious methods to mislead them. Individuals form their opinions on the basis of the evidence available. If evidence is withheld from the public, or distorted, or manufactured, a sound opinion may be impossible.

Suppression of the facts is one method used to mislead the public. This technique is used very frequently in time of war. Important documents are not published, and passages may be omitted from those that are published. Newspapers aid the campaign of hate by refusing to print news showing the enemy in a favorable light. Mr. Arthur Ponsonby tells in his *Falsehood in War-Time* that a British correspondent in the World War who mentioned a chivalrous act done by a German to an Englishman received a telegram of rebuke from his employer, informing the correspondent that he did not want to hear about any good Germans.¹⁰ This journalist was doubtless pursuing the policy, common at that period, of suppressing certain kinds of news and “doctoring” much of what was published.

But suppression of the facts is not a practice peculiar to war time. In the democracies we have no government officials listed on the payroll as censors, but certain facts may be withheld from the public by government officials as well as by private individuals who are in a position to exercise such power. Such censorship of the source of news may be as effective and almost as dangerous as censorship by an official censor. In

¹⁰ *Falsehood in War-Time*, 21. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc.

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either case, the public is fed on a diet of news restricted to suit the purposes of the propagandist responsible for the omissions. During the 1936 Presidential campaign, Governor Landon attacked Mr. Harry L. Hopkins for refusing to make public WPA cost records and payrolls. He said, "I view newspaper publicity as a legitimate purpose. All public records, of any kind or description, should be open to the newspapers." And he added, "Censorship of the source of news is just as bad as censorship of the news."¹¹ When important facts that the people need to know in order to form intelligent judgments are withheld from them, public opinion may be effectively directed to suit the desires of the propagandists. Scientists sometimes experiment on guinea pigs by feeding them a diet deficient in certain necessary vitamins. The result is weakened guinea pigs that do not react as do normal ones. When citizens are fed news from which certain kinds of facts have been carefully extracted, the result is weakened citizens incapable of forming judgments worthy of the sovereigns of a democracy.

Distortion of the facts is another device of the propagandist. A patriotic women's organization made use of this device in 1926, when it published a bulletin classifying as socialistic or communistic such measures as laws requiring equal pay to men and women for equal work, eight-hour laws for women workers, prohibition of night work for women in industry, provision for a retirement system for superannuated public employees, and compulsory education for children. More recently, a book has been published that contains a "who's who of radicalism," in which Senator Borah, Newton D. Baker, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mrs. Louis D. Brandeis, and five La Follettes are listed along with numerous communists. In each case, the technique is that of distortion rather than fabrication, because

¹¹ Associated Press dispatch, October 6, 1936.

there is not a complete disregard of the truth, but the facts are given a misleading setting and the impression intended to be conveyed to the reader is one not justified by the facts.

A recent book, written to undermine respect for the Supreme Court, used the same device when its authors quoted Chief Justice Roger B. Taney as having said in his Dred Scott decision, "The Negro race is regarded as so far inferior that it has no rights. . . The Negro might lawfully and justly be reduced to slavery for the white man's benefit."¹² What Chief Justice Taney actually said was:

"It is difficult at this day to realize the state of public opinion in relation to that unfortunate race, which prevailed in civilized and enlightened portions of the world at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and when the Constitution of the United States was framed and adopted. But the public history of every European nation displays it in a manner too plain to be mistaken.

"They had for more than a century been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit."¹³

What the propagandists against the Supreme Court did in this instance was to take a sentence out of its setting, garble it, break it in two, and imply that a statement of historical fact represented Taney's viewpoint of what was true in his time. Thus, the first great liberal justice on the Court is made to seem an arch reactionary in order that the picture of the Court as the consistent defenders of reaction may be made complete in every detail.

¹² Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, *The Nine Old Men*, 59. Copyright, 1936, by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc.

¹³ 19 Howard, 413.

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Distortion of the facts, if skillfully used, may be a most effective method of misleading the public. The element of truth in the picture gives an impression of accuracy to the observer who cannot dig beneath the surface. He is likely to recognize the element of truth without recognizing the distortion, and if he does suspect that there has been distortion of the facts, he may not know where truth leaves off and falsehood begins. The picture established in his mind is likely to be that desired by the propagandist, regardless of any lurking suspicion that may accompany it.

Promoters sometimes go further than distortion of the facts, and actually fabricate evidence which is passed on to the public as facts. Distortion transforms or twists the evidence; fabrication creates it. The propagandist makes certain additions to the facts in order that he may more effectively make his impression on the minds of men. If he cannot build the desired opinion with facts, he will build it with falsehoods that mislead the public. In time of war this device is used freely. Lies about the enemy are made out of whole cloth. Hardly any fiction, no matter how grotesque, is too extreme to influence a large proportion of the people in the excitement that accompanies war. In time of peace, fabrication must be more subtle if it is to be effective, for there is more danger of exposure. Nobody of any influence in a country wants to expose lies about the enemy during a war; but in time of peace, newspapers and other agencies are on the alert to expose prevarication of too gross a sort. However, people sometimes pay little attention to exposures, and having once got hold of an idea, they may cling to it regardless of the evidence that may later demonstrate its unsoundness.

Fabrication is used by politicians when they think it will yield results. The "prosperity is just around the corner" propaganda of the Hoover administration is an example of fabrica-

tion that seems to have been due either to wishful thinking or desperation. At any rate, it proved to be a poor technique in that case, because the people grew tired of trying to reach the corner, and, as they waited, became more and more angry at the administration in power. In political campaigns, fabrication is sometimes used openly, but because the other party is likely to expose such misrepresentation, and perhaps capitalize on it, such procedure is risky. Lies can be peddled with more safety in a whispering campaign. When used in such fashion, they may be difficult to deal with. The victims may hesitate to bring them into the open with a denial, for fear that they will be more widely advertised and their capacity for harm increased by such action.

Many centuries ago Plato, who knew something of the technique of propaganda, said in his discussion of the ideal state, "To the rulers of the state then . . . it belongs of right to use falsehood, to deceive either enemies or their own citizens, for the good of the state: and no one else may meddle with this privilege." In order to keep the laboring class contented, he would have them told in mythical language, "You are doubtless all brethren . . . but the God who created you mixed gold in the composition of such of you as are qualified to rule, which gives them the highest value; while in the auxiliaries he made silver an ingredient, assigning iron and copper to the cultivators of the soil and the other workmen." Plato doubted if the first generation would believe this fiction, but he thought their children and their children's children would accept it. Myth-making has long played an important part in creating pictures in human minds, and it has not generally been an exclusive prerogative of the rulers of the state. Although one of the oldest devices of propaganda, it has not yet gone out of date; but the more educated the people are, and the more trained in

public affairs, the more difficult is it to deceive them with falsehoods.

Wealthy interests sometimes use still another method for winning public opinion by the ambush method. They may give large sums to philanthropic institutions, and thus make the institutions fight their battles for them. Since the depression began in 1929, newspapers have not infrequently carried items with such headings as, "High Taxes on Wealthy Crippling The Hospitals, Surgeons Told." University presidents, and the heads of other institutions depending largely upon endowment and gifts from the wealthy for support, have spoken out against taxation policies of the government. If the Mellons, Rockefellers, du Ponts, Vanderbilts, or other individuals whose names arouse a similar stereotype in the mind of the public, protest against high taxes, they get little sympathy; but if a great university or a hospital or an orphanage lends its prestige to such a protest, the protest is likely to carry more weight. The lesson is plain: by identifying the interests of such institutions with their own interests, wealthy men may build a false front from which to issue propaganda designed to save their dividends.

Mr. Ernest Seeman, in an article in *The New Republic* of September 30, 1936, discussed Duke University in that connection. His story begins with Washington Duke's development of the tobacco industry and his canny gift of a \$100,000 worth of tobacco stocks to Trinity College at a time when the Methodists were beginning to demand legislation against the use of tobacco. After the receipt of this gift, the anti-cigarette campaign rapidly died down and the president of Trinity became a bishop. James B. Duke carried on the work of his father in the tobacco industry, and after he had secured a near monopoly in the United States, acquired vast holdings in the power industry. Finally, satiated with money-making, he set up a Duke

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Endowment, which was to derive its income from a large block of power stocks. Trinity College became Duke University, with a rich income from the Endowment. The Endowment has also helped orphanages, hospitals, Methodist churches, and Methodist ministers. Mr. Seeman suggests that it also helps to guard the wealth that remains in the hands of the Dukes, for the Duke Endowment, Duke University, and the Duke Power Company have all on occasion sent out propaganda directed against public ownership of public utilities. Although nobody knows just what mingling of altruistic and selfish motives prompted the gift of the Duke millions to the philanthropies mentioned, the fact remains that a "benevolent and almost religious institution" found its economic interests made identical with the economic interests of a group of wealthy individuals. Naturally, it would help the cause along, for they must sink or swim together. Whether the activities of such an institution and such individuals constitute a dangerous attempt of economic overlords to maintain their position on the backs of the common people, or just an attempt of honest owners of private property to protect their legal and moral rights, is a matter of opinion. The point is that individuals have used a device to give prestige to their cause, hoping that the prestige will carry them safely through the way they want to go. They hope to ride through as Ulysses and his men did from the cave of the blind Cyclops when they clung beneath his sheep.

Propagandists make use of Walter Lippmann's principle that it is not what we see but what we think we see that determines the way we act. It is their job to build in our minds mental pictures that will cause us to react as they want us to react. If the presentation of facts will develop the picture, they present facts. If suppression of facts will contribute to that end, they suppress facts. If distortion of the facts or the manufacture of synthetic facts will serve the purpose they distort or manufac-

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ture. Then, when necessary, they may conceal the source of propaganda, or camouflage it with an imposing superstructure designed to impress the public by seeming to serve it.

Not all those who want to manipulate public opinion are acquainted with the technique necessary to success, but if they have the money, they can buy the services of experts who know the technique. These expert manipulators of opinion are variously known as press agents, publicity agents, and public relations counsels. They are members of a new profession that has developed to meet the needs of an era when public good will on a large scale is vital to the success of men or institutions who would prosper or survive. Business organizations, politicians, and governments must all have their publicity agents to help them win and retain the good will of the people—for the people may make or break them.

Rulers have long recognized the importance of leadership of public opinion and have used propaganda as an agency of social control. They have known that governments have a psychological as well as a physical basis. However, it remained for the dictators of modern times to make most use of the technique of manufacturing and manipulating the opinions of their people by controlling the sources of information and misinformation. The dictators have set up great propaganda machines that make use of all the devices known to publicity agents, and the publicity agents of the dictators have no competitors. They have a monopoly in the field of political propaganda. The technique of leading the people like sheep—even though it be to the slaughter—has been so successful in dictator-governed countries that demagogues have tried to use the same tactics in the democracies. Thus far, they have not succeeded in countries where the people are trained in self-government. But the fact that the people in three of the world's most important countries have been lead to surrender their destiny to

dictators, and have been made to like it by high-powered propaganda methods, constitutes a standing threat to popular government. We may well wonder if there is any absolute guarantee that the people of the great democracies will not be led to surrender their liberties if a crisis upsets them and a demagogue with the necessary skill comes along to lead them as the piper led the village children to destruction. The music that the pipers play has an alluring sound for dissatisfied men.

Modern dictators realize that they must keep the support of their people in order to stay in power. Hitler recognized this when he established a ministry of propaganda and set out to make supporters of all Germans. Propaganda must supplement force if the dictator is to last long, and force should be used only on those who will not be converted by propaganda. Mussolini preceded Hitler in the field of amalgamated force and propaganda politics, but these two dictators have used similar techniques. Both have set up systems that have completely controlled the newspapers, using censorship and distortion whenever they seemed necessary. In Italy, only persons whose names are approved by the government are allowed to practice the journalistic profession. Instructions to newspapers come from a government press bureau at frequent intervals. Both countries control motion pictures and radio broadcasting, and both have substituted propaganda for education in the schools. A news dispatch from Berlin in 1936 related that the rest periods and luncheon hours of German workers were to be utilized for propaganda purposes. "Loud-speakers," it said, "are to be installed in all rest, recreation and lunch rooms where the workers spend their half-hour rest periods and lunch time."¹⁴ All dictator propagandists make use of symbols to influence the public mind. In Germany, the raised arm salute, the greeting "Heil Hitler," the display of the Swastika flag (Jews may not

¹⁴ *New York Times*, October 29, 1936.

display it), and Der Führer are all symbols of the new Germany. Der Führer stands for unity and power. He is excluded from criticism, said Rudolph Hess in 1934, because "every one feels and knows: He was always right and will always be right." In Italy, symbols are found in hero worship, the cult of Romanism, and in certain propaganda "devils," such as, "injustice of the Versailles treaty," League of Nations, Mafia, Freemasons, capitalism, communism. The aim in any dictator-governed country is to create "one single public opinion."

A study of propaganda brings us to two conclusions. One is that the people should have the most adequate facilities possible for getting the facts about public matters. The other is that people should be taught how to recognize propaganda and properly evaluate it. There is no simple way by which either of these objectives can be achieved. William Jennings Bryan and others have suggested that a government bulletin be established to give the public the truth about political matters. A few states have provided for the dissemination, just before elections, of a little pamphlet giving essential information about candidates and issues on which the people are to vote. Although the latter practice may be of some value, it is doubtful if a government bulletin or newspaper would be very helpful. There is a danger that it would either become a propaganda sheet for the party in power, or be so uninteresting that most people would not read it. Probably we can make more progress by improving the facilities that we have. The radio and newspapers and public meetings are the agencies upon which we most depend for information. They will serve us pretty well if we demand high standards.

We are brought then to the individual. How is he to be taught to recognize propaganda and develop a certain immunity to it, and how is he to be taught to demand high standards? We do now know the complete answer to such a

question, but we do know that we can do much good by education. We can teach people to be aware of their own weaknesses—that is, of their tendency to develop standardized ideas and to act emotionally, of their tendency to be guided by prejudice, of their tendency to form conclusions on the basis of incomplete evidence. We can teach them to examine the sources of information—to notice where it came from, and who reported it, and the circumstances surrounding the news and the report. We can teach them the nature of censorship. We can make them want to be objective—if we catch them young enough. Our main hope of salvation lies in developing critical thinking in individuals. And it is not a hopeless task.

Propaganda in a democracy is not necessarily either bad or dangerous. It is objectionable if used for a bad end, or on people incapable of properly evaluating it. Propaganda that appeals to reason may help intelligent men to come to a rational conclusion, just as the pleas and briefs of opposing lawyers aid a judge in his decision. Fabrication, distortion of the facts, and emotional trickery will not influence them. Where the presentation of all sides of every question is permitted, propaganda will be dangerous only to the degree that the people lack the wisdom to choose wisely between the alternatives offered them.

V

NEWSPAPERS

NEWSPAPERS are commonly ranked among the most important organs of opinion. Their power is derived from the fact that they constitute the average person's main source of news about the outside world, and to a certain extent from the prestige that adheres to the printed page. Within the last few years, the radio has become a competitor of the press as a broadcaster of the news, and has weakened the power of the press by destroying its semi-monopoly over the channel through which news and views go into the minds of men. The average citizen cannot afford to buy more than one or two newspapers, nor does he have time to read them if he buys them. But the average citizen can afford and does take time to listen to the news reports and the important speeches that come over the radio. The newspapers may berate the candidate who is asking for his vote, but in the evening by the fireside he can hear the candidate present his own case. There can be little doubt, however, that newspapers still stand as a prime factor in public opinion in spite of competition.

The press is important because it influences opinion in three ways: (1) by giving the facts on which the opinion of its readers will largely be based; (2) by editorial comment on the facts; (3) by serving as a mirror of public opinion. In democracies, where freedom of the press prevails, the newspapers are free to use these different avenues to power as they please—as long as they can sell papers and do not propagate libelous untruths damaging to particular individuals.

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The public should have a right to expect that the newspapers will "give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect, or interest involved."¹ Editorials are expected to present the viewpoints of editors, but the news should present the facts, and all the facts of public interest that space will permit. After a dispatch from one of its correspondents in Spain had drawn the criticism of some of its readers, *The New York Times*, through one of the columns on its editorial page, said that there was no censor in the *Times* office. "It is good journalism as well as good democracy when a newspaper has decided that its correspondents are up to their job, to let them tell their story without emendation at this end of the wire. Much is heard today of Proletarian literature and Bourgeois literature. This paper does not for a moment tolerate the idea that there is proletarian news and anti-proletarian news." And then it said, "There is only democratic news. This is news free and unfettered."² Unfortunately, such a theory is not held, or at least not practiced, by all newspapers. In many of them, the news is commonly used as propaganda to do insidiously the work that editorials are supposed to do openly.

The news may be incomplete for a variety of reasons. It may be distorted unintentionally because of the reporter's inability to describe what he saw or accurately report what he heard. It may be wilfully distorted by the reporter or the editorial censor, so that it will tend to establish in the minds of readers the kind of pictures that the editors want established there. But news need not be made to lie in order to serve such a purpose. An editor must choose what he will print, for he cannot print everything, and he must choose what will be emphasized. A paper is as important for what it fails to print

¹ From a statement of Adolph Ochs in 1896, *New York Times*, May 8, 1935.

² December 11, 1936.

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as for what it prints, for the readers will form opinions on the basis of the evidence that they are able to get. And it is true also that the emphasis given certain facts may be as important as the facts themselves. One reason opinions differ is that people attach weight to different parts of the evidence. Newspaper emphasis is likely to lead to reader emphasis: that is, the reader will attach most weight to the facts most emphasized by the paper. Because editors know that we form opinions when our attention is attracted to something, they try to attract our attention to particular facts in order to persuade us to accept their point of view. They play the part of advocates, presenting the portion of the news that supports their position as the evidence with which to win the public.

Opinions can be based on sound foundations only when the evidence is all in; but the evidence may be withheld. In 1937, a prominent professor whose contract with his university had been allowed to expire, and whose case led to numerous protests against the university's action, wrote to a middle western editor: "You may be interested to know that the papers of New Haven are not allowed to carry any word about my case, not even letters from wealthy and conservative readers! So it remains for papers from Wisconsin, New York, Chicago and other centers to comment on my case!"³ Many of the people of New Haven would thus be unable to obtain evidence on this particular matter unless they got it from outside papers, or by word of mouth, or over the radio. *Time* tells us that when a Methodist group in New York condemned the Hearst press in 1935, journalistic ethics prevented all the New York dailies except Mr. Hearst's own *American* from reporting the condemnation.⁴ In the great democracy across the ocean where the press is supposedly as free as in America, the newspapers, by

³ *The Progressive*, January 23, 1937.

⁴ *Time*, January 21, 1935.

a censorship said to be self-imposed, did not print news of the King Edward-Mrs. Simpson episode until weeks after American newspapers had begun printing dispatches about it. The sovereign was about to be forced from his throne, or about to force himself from it, while the public had no knowledge of what was going on.

Of similar import is the emphasis given to different phases of the news. The individual who read about the Spanish civil war would likely be led to sympathize with the side that got the least unfavorable reports in his newspaper. If he read articles stressing the disorder in the regions controlled by the loyalists, and of reigns of terror by anarchistic elements, he would sympathize with the rebels. If he read articles telling of the bombing of women and children by the rebels and stressing the German, Italian, and Moorish content of the rebel army, he would sympathize with the loyalists.

That different newspapers stress different news is readily revealed by a glance at the headlines of several papers on the same day. For instance, on March 2, 1937, the main headline in *The New York Times* was: HIGH COURT BACKS GOLD BAN; 5 TO 4 RULING AIDS NEW DEAL; SPIRITED DEBATE ON REVISION ("revision" referring to President Roosevelt's Supreme Court proposal). Other front page headlines were: CARNEGIE-ILLINOIS CONFERS WITH C.I.O. ON WAGE CONTRACT; BRITAIN AIDS AREAS WHOSE WOES VEXED EDWARD AS RULER; BRESLIN TO MEET MYSTERY WITNESS IN REDWOOD CASE. The main headline in the *Chicago Tribune* that day was: ORDER DEATH CELL 'LIE TEST.' Other leading headlines were: SUPPORTERS OF COURT PACKING DENOUNCE FOES; YOUTH INJURED IN 'HELL WEEK' STUNT AT N.U.; FEARS TO TELL PAPA OF CRASH: GIRL IS JAILED; CARNEGIE-ILL. STEEL AND C.I.O. PARLEY ON PAY. On the same day, *The Birmingham Age-Herald's* headlines were: HIGH COURT PENSION MADE LAW; PAY RISE SOUGHT BY T.C.I. MEN; 12 QUALIFY TO RUN IN CITY RACE.

Headlines are the first evidence of the way in which a newspaper presents the news. If it is inclined to editorialize its news columns, the fact will usually be revealed in the headlines. That some papers do this more than others is illustrated by the headlines dealing with President Roosevelt's proposal to enlarge the Supreme Court, in two different papers, each of which was editorially opposed to the proposal. On February 6, 1937, *The New York Times* headline was: ROOSEVELT ASKS POWER TO REFORM COURTS, INCREASING THE SUPREME BENCH TO 15 JUSTICES; CONGRESS STARTLED, BUT EXPECTED TO APPROVE. On the same day, across the front page of the *Chicago Tribune*, its readers saw: PRESIDENT HITS HIGH COURT. The next day, *The New York Times* said: COURT REFORM FACES FIGHT, BUT PASSAGE IS FORECAST; VIEWS OF JUSTICES SOUGHT; while the *Chicago Tribune's* headline read: GIRD FOR HIGH COURT BATTLE, GRAVEST CRISIS SINCE SLAVERY HITS CONGRESS. In *The New York Times* of February 19, the headline read: COURT PLAN BOLT SPURS ROOSEVELT TO INTENSIFY DRIVE; FOUR OPPOSING SENATORS CALLED TO WHITE HOUSE—CONGRESS IS TOLD PEOPLE BACK HIM. That day, the *Chicago Tribune's* version was: U.S. WANTS NEW DEAL; WILL GET IT: ROOSEVELT; CONSTITUTION OR NO, HE TELLS SENATORS. On February 23, the *Chicago Tribune's* opposition to the Roosevelt plan was expressed in this headline: HITLER'S STATE CHURCH IS OMEN TO U.S. ON COURT; HIGH TRIBUNAL SOLE GUARD OF LIBERTY.

The Progressive, weekly newspaper of the La Follette Progressives, sometimes shows its stand with such headlines as: BIG BENEFITS OF 'RECOVERY' GO TO BOSSES, and, RED SCARE AT CORNELL U. IS GIVEN LAUGH. *The New York Times* of November 13, 1936, had a news item headed, ROCKEFELLER PAYS TRIBUTE TO FARLEY. In *The Progressive*, the news became JOHN D. JR. NOW WANTS TO 'MAKE UP' WITH F.D.R., and the item began with the sentence: "John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Liberty Leaguer and heavy contributor to the campaign fund of Alfred M. Landon, has

joined the parade of Republicans 'making up' with the Roosevelt Administration, it became known this week."

That even *The New York Times* is not always wholly objective in its treatment of the news was demonstrated in a survey of its dispatches from Russia from 1917 to 1920, which was published as a supplement to *The New Republic* of August 4, 1920. The study shows that the news emphasis was unduly optimistic in the Kerensky period, and that after the Bolshevik revolution, propaganda for intervention sometimes appeared in the news. Russian counter-revolutions were reported optimistically. In this case, the *Times* was probably more guilty of wishful thinking than of a deliberate attempt to propagandize through its news columns, but the effect on the readers would be the same regardless of the reason for the bias.

The harm done by the presentation of propagandizing news lies in the fact that the contents of the news columns register in the mind of the average reader as facts. The excuse is sometimes made that inaccuracies creep into news columns because of the speed with which the modern paper goes to press, but such an explanation can account for hardly any of the most objectionable inaccuracies. A consistent bias in the news columns is a result of a consistent bias in the editorial offices and is an attempt to prejudice the readers. If the newspaper is in doubt as to the accuracy of reports that come to it, the doubt should be reflected in the item as presented. An illustration of the way in which this can be done may be found in the following news item: GRAZIANA GRAVELY HURT, SAYS DISPATCH TO PARIS. "Paris, Feb. 28.—The condition of Marshal Rodolfo Graziana, Viceroy of Ethiopia, has become alarming, according to a news dispatch from Jibuti . . . to the Havas Agency in Paris.

"It was reported that bomb fragments which wounded the marshal . . . had penetrated his lungs and that pneumonia had set in today. Paris newspapers printing the dispatch accom-

pany it with the statement that it was not confirmed by Italian sources and that they did not assume responsibility for its authenticity.”⁵ Such candor is not common, particularly if the subject dealt with has political significance of a controversial nature. As a result, the average American’s knowledge of foreign countries is a mixture of myths and half-truths lightly seasoned with facts. What does he know about Russia or Italy or Germany or Spain? He may have a strong opinion on conditions in any one or all of these countries, but the stronger the opinion, the more the probability that it is based on propagandized news. A similar situation is all too common when political or economic issues controversial in nature are involved. But in domestic matters, dependence on newspapers for information is not so complete as in the case of foreign news.

The “exercise of a well-informed and sensible opinion by the great bulk of the citizens” is an essential condition of democratic government, as James Bryce pointed out a good many years ago.⁶ If the “facts” presented for the formation of opinion are so artfully supplied or so insidiously tampered with as to prevent a fair judgment on the merits of a question, opinion is artificially directed, and the result is threatening to democracy. Newspapers that attempt to give the people all the facts they have a right to know, and give them in unbiased fashion, are among the most important instrumentalities of democracy.

The editorial page is the page for the opinions of the editor and the arguments that he designs to make converts of his readers. Time was when editorials were a powerful influence in molding public opinion. Horace Greeley of the *Tribune* and Dana of the *Sun* and Weed of the *Knickerbocker Press* loomed large in any calculation of the directive forces of public

⁵ *New York Times*, March 1, 1937.

⁶ *Modern Democracies*, Vol. 1, 109. The Macmillan Company.

opinion in their day. Men waited for their opinions on important subjects and were their disciples, just as in our own time there were disciples of William Jennings Bryan for so long, and then Woodrow Wilson Democrats, and in Wisconsin there were the followers of La Follette. But even in that age of journalistic giants, no doubt many of the editorials on great political questions said emphatically things that their readers were already thinking and fed fuel to flames already burning. That is the kind of editorial that is always most enthusiastically received.

Now Horace Greeley and the rest are dead. The editors of today have apparently succumbed to the machine age. The presentation of the news is considered the main duty of the modern newspaper. This emphasis on the function of recording facts rather than expressing opinions has influenced the character of editorials and has tended to change them from a medium for exhortations from the editor to a vehicle for interpreting and explaining the news. When the great newspapers commit themselves to a cause, they attempt to win their readers by restrained reasoning rather than by exhortation. Many editorials are made up of analysis and clarification, as well as opinion; and sometimes no opinion is expressed.

The modern period is not one of personal editors. William Allen White may be the last one of the species now extant. The average reader of *The New York Times* or the *Herald Tribune*, or any other great paper, does not know the names of any of its editorial writers, and very seldom stops to wonder who they are. The editorials represent the point of view of the paper, not of an individual. As a matter of fact, editorials in the large newspapers do not present the interpretation or the reasoning of one editor, but are the product of several editors in discussion. The institution overshadows the men, and the

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specific parentage of an editorial remains unknown. The opinions of great newspapers are still read and respected by thoughtful men, and their influence is felt in the circles of the statesmen, but editors do not tear a passion to tatters. Journalists who wax vehement editorially will find their customers reading the news columns and looking at the pictures, and ignoring their editorials.

The modern tendency to take editorials with a grain of salt, or not at all, is sometimes attributed to the fact that there are no longer any great editors. This is probably an erroneous assumption. The truth seems to be that the modern paper is a product of the modern age, institutionalized editorial page and all. This is an age of hustle and hurry when many a man reads his paper in a crowded street car or commutation train, and reads mainly the news columns. The citizen who does take time to read the editorials may consider his mind his own. He is not likely to want ready-made opinions pushed at him too presumptuously. He would prefer to think that his conclusions are based on his own reasonable judgment of the facts. As one journalist has suggested, if his opinions are to be formed by the newspaper, he "must be stalked warily." A militant editor who exhorted with might and main would frighten him away.

There was once a time when the American press was considered an index and a mirror of public opinion. James Bryce wrote that this was the function it chiefly aimed to discharge. Public opinion was the deity that public men worshiped, the press its priest, which they attempted to conciliate. Such a belief is no longer widely held among students of public opinion. Whatever may have been true in other periods, there has been striking evidence in recent years that the press, particularly the large city dailies, does not very accurately reflect public

opinion. On matters where economic class interests are involved, the newspapers do not even in a rough way approximate public opinion.

Closely connected with the subject of the press as a mirror of public opinion is the question of the power of the press. Alexis de Tocqueville, distinguished student of American democracy, approximately a hundred years ago wrote of the press, "Its influence in America is immense." And he said further, "When a great number of the organs of the press adopt the same line of conduct, their influence becomes irresistible; and public opinion, when it is perpetually assailed from the same side, eventually yields to the attack." If he were writing today, he would not say that, for, just as the press is no longer considered a very accurate mirror of public opinion, it is no longer considered very powerful in matters political.

After the election of 1936 had gone heavily against the newspapers, numerous autopsies were held and obsequies performed over the dead influence of the press. In some circles the death of the press seems to have been exaggerated. The inability of the newspapers to dictate elections was not established for the first time in 1936. It is doubtful if they ever did have such a power. Certainly there have been other striking instances when they have fought on the losing side. In England there must be several million people who regularly read Conservative newspapers and vote against the Conservatives. The Liberal and Labor victories in England before and after the World War were won in spite of the opposition of an overwhelmingly Conservative press. In France, it is likewise clear that many readers of the conservative papers vote for socialist or even communist candidates in the elections. In the United States, city elections have often demonstrated that other influences are much more powerful than that of the press. Mayor William Hale Thompson of Chicago knew what it was to meet the almost solid op-

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position of the city's newspapers and beat it. In New York City every newspaper except one opposed the election of Mayor Gaynor in 1909, and he was elected. In 1924, Mayor Hyman was elected by an overwhelming majority over the opposition of two-thirds of the metropolitan papers. Similar examples might be given from the political history of Boston, Kansas City, and other cities, but the case is complete enough. The press cannot change the direction of a powerful drift of public opinion, and this fact had been established long before the election of 1936.

That election, however, furnishes an excellent case study in the press's lack of power and its failure to serve as a mouthpiece of public opinion. The newspaper opposition to President Roosevelt has been variously estimated; some have said that as many as 85 per cent of the papers north of the Mason and Dixon line were in the opposition. A conservative estimate of the press of the whole United States, based on circulation figures, placed the pro-Roosevelt papers at 40 per cent. The figures for the large cities can be given with accuracy. *The New Republic* of March 17, 1937, contained a supplement discussing the subject thoroughly and including a table that contrasted the stand of the press in the fifteen largest cities with the vote of the people at the last election. In New York City, for instance, the circulation of pro-Roosevelt papers was slightly over two and a half million. The pro-Landon circulation was slightly over 2,200,000. In the election, Roosevelt received 2,041,000 votes to 665,000 for Landon. In Chicago, the circulation of pro-Landon papers was more than eight times as great as the pro-Roosevelt circulation, but Roosevelt carried Chicago by a vote of 1,250,000 to 701,000. In Baltimore, there was no paper that favored the President, but he carried Baltimore by more than two to one. In the fifteen cities together, the pro-Landon circulation was approximately 71 per cent as against 29 per cent for

Roosevelt, whereas the vote of the people in the election was 69 per cent Democratic and 31 per cent Republican. Some of the newspapers referred to had a considerable circulation in a trade area outside the city proper, which introduces an element of error into the figures given, but in view of the fact that the out-of-city circulation of pro-Roosevelt and pro-Landon papers would more or less offset each other, it is reasonable to suppose that the proportions given are substantially correct.

The New York Post said editorially, "Election day told how far, in public estimation, the bulk of the press has fallen from the old standards, how tragically its influence upon readers has declined." But *The Raleigh News and Observer* suggested that it was doubtful if the press ever possessed "an immediate power on any immediate issue to shape the public mind." One editorial alone probably never changed many minds. "The power of the press lies in the repetition across years of policies and ideas." The conclusion of *The Raleigh News and Observer* was that the press has the power to lead but not to dominate. Such a view has much to support it. The man who reads editorials and thinks about public matters respects his favorite newspaper and gives consideration to its arguments, but it is only one factor that will exert an influence on him. It may win him with its arguments, but it is not likely to frighten him, and it will certainly not command him.

The press, whether it attempts to exert its influence through news columns or editorials, or both, is not powerful enough to win its readers when such propaganda runs counter to their habits, prejudices, class loyalties, or economic interests. The individual is more likely to change his newspaper than his prejudices, but he may keep both unless the conflict between the two becomes sharp enough to irritate him. During the Presidential campaign of 1936, the circulation of pro-Roosevelt papers in-

creased, but a great many individuals did not change their newspapers; they simply ignored their editorial positions.

The opinions advanced and the causes championed by newspapers reflect the viewpoints of their owners. This does not necessarily coincide with the viewpoint of the general public. The large city dailies are owned by corporations of substantial size, and they usually reflect the attitudes of the business men who control them, sometimes with slight modifications for the sake of expediency. They take the capitalistic position because their owners are capitalists who have investment problems, labor troubles, income tax worries, and all the other cares common to that class. Small papers are owned and managed by men who are usually average citizens in the community in regard to both economic status and intellectual outlook. They will, therefore, ordinarily be found to approximate public opinion more closely than their big brothers of the cities. In any case, the press must be regarded as mirroring the opinions of the class to which its owners belong rather than the opinions of the public.

Many of the characteristics of the modern press find explanation in the fact that the newspaper of today is primarily a commercial undertaking. It is in the business of selling news and features to those who wish to buy them, and space in its columns to advertisers who wish to reach the public through this medium. It still purports to furnish truthful news and to advise the people, but the fact is that it must follow a policy that will show a financial profit. The editor, who may be a cultured man of letters with high ideals that he wishes to propagate, finds his sphere cramped by the owner, who is a business man or a group of business men. Circulation must be kept up.

When the American press was nearer to its infancy, newspapers were more often dominated by missionary zeal than are

their modern successors. Editors spoke with enthusiastic frankness unrestrained by any fear of antagonizing their readers. Thus, B. F. Bache could say of George Washington, in the *Aurora* in 1797, “. . . the man who is the source of all the misfortunes of our country, is this day reduced to a level with his fellow citizens, and is no longer possessed of power to multiply evils upon the United States. If ever there was a period of rejoicing, this is the moment . . . the name of Washington from this day ceases to give a currency to political iniquity, and to legalize corruption.” A few months later, *Porcupine's Gazette* said of Bache, “This atrocious wretch . . . knows that all men of any understanding set him down as an abandoned liar, as a tool and a hireling; and he is content that they should do so.” And then, primarily for the *Gazette's* foreign readers, the editor said, he described his competitor in these words: “He is an ill-looking devil. His eyes never get above your knees. He is of a sallow complexion, hollow-cheeked, dead-eyed, and has a *tout ensemble* just like that of a fellow who has been about a week or ten days on a gibbet.” Several years later, de Tocqueville gave evidence that newspaper tone had not improved much when he wrote: “The characteristics of the American journalist consist in an open and coarse appeal to the passions of the populace; and he habitually abandons the principles of political science to assail the characters of individuals, to track them into private life, and disclose all their weaknesses and errors.”

Since that early period of American journalism, the editorial has reached the height of its power and declined to its present position. Bitter words have not yet become wholly obsolete. In 1896, William Jennings Bryan's nomination led the *New York World* to say, “Lunacy having dictated the platform, it was perhaps natural that hysteria should evolve the candidate.” The *New-York Tribune* said, “Crude, raw, inexperienced, demagogic, a facile platform orator and plausible master of cam-

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paign sophistries, the candidate put in nomination to-day is indeed a typical representative of the ideals and tendencies of the modernized and Western Democracy." In the campaign of 1936, a few newspapers made similar acid comments, but the evidence is conclusive that in 1936 the results obtained were not commensurate with the editorial energy consumed or the newspaper space used for such diatribes.

Modern newspapers are cheaply priced and widely circulated, and this fact has had an important influence on them. All classes of people have formed the habit of reading the papers in search of information and entertainment in a wide variety of fields. Some writers have suggested that modern readers have less curiosity for the higher kinds of knowledge and more for the lower kinds, with a resulting increase in emphasis on sporting news, matrimonial troubles, crime, and accidents. That there is some truth in this contention there can be little doubt, but the foregoing quotations from newspapers of a former age would seem to indicate that the modern reader is not substantially less intelligent than his predecessors.

The pressure for a large circulation has exerted a particularly strong influence on the daily papers of the cities. Much of a paper's revenue comes from advertisers, but the advertisers will patronize the papers with the large circulations. Hence, the paper must please a large number of readers, in order that the advertisers will continue to support it. Readers are to blame for many of the faults in the paper, for it must give them what they want. They pay two or three cents a copy for it and expect to get truthful news and a wide variety of features, always retaining the privilege of changing papers whenever they please. The paper cannot afford to alienate its readers. Neither can it afford to antagonize its advertisers; but the larger its circulation, the greater is its independence from advertiser influence.

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The growth of newspapers with an evil influence and an appeal to unthinking readers has given rise to many pessimistic comments on the fate of the modern press. Charles A. Beard told an audience of school superintendents in 1935 that one of the most financially successful owners of chain newspapers in the United States had, in the opinion of everyone of talents and character with whom he had come in contact, "pandered to depraved tastes" and "been an enemy of everything that is noblest and best in our American tradition," and exploited for money-making purposes every "cesspool of vice and crime" that he could find. The audience indicated strong approval of these sweeping declarations. That the policy of such a newspaper magnate should have resulted in the growth of an enormous circulation for his papers is a regrettable comment on the characteristics of the reading public.

It has been said that there is a Gresham's law of journalism—that the baser newspapers tend to drive the better ones out of circulation. The paper with the largest circulation in the United States is a New York City tabloid. That, along with the fact that other tabloids and the Hearst press have attracted a large proportion of the reading public might be cited as evidence that we have fallen on evil days in journalism. But there is another side to the picture. If we have newspapers that rank with the most pernicious in American history, we also have the best newspapers in American history. Almost any widely read individual can name offhand at least a half dozen papers whose standards would compare favorably with those of any of their predecessors, and in regard to the quantity and quality of news presented, definitely excel them. Such newspapers are financially successful because intelligent readers are numerous enough to make them profitable and give them appeal as advertising mediums to those who wish access to that kind of people.

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Thomas Jefferson expressed the belief in 1787 that "the good sense of the people" is a country's best defense, and although the people might sometimes be led astray for the moment, they would soon correct themselves. "The way to prevent these irregular interpositions of the people," he said, "is to give them full information of their affairs thro' the channel of the public papers & to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."⁷ Years later, after he had finished a public career which had led him through many hard fought political battles, he wrote, "A truth now and then projecting into the ocean of newspaper lies, serves like head-lands to correct our course. Indeed, my scepticism as to everything I see in a newspaper, makes me indifferent whether I ever see one."⁸

De Tocqueville wrote of the American press, "it constitutes a singular power, so strangely composed of mingled good and evil that it is at the same time indispensable to the existence of freedom, and nearly incompatible with the maintenance of public order." He concluded that it was necessary to submit to the evils engendered by a free press in order to enjoy the "inestimable benefits" that it insures. Although most of us who live today would not consider the press as a serious threat to the maintenance of public order, we would readily agree that its influence is a mixture of good and evil. Scandal, distorted news, misrepresentation, and baneful editorials are the fare daily fed to many thousands of readers. But the newspapers atone for many of their sins by relentlessly exposing evildoers

⁷ To Edward Carrington, January 16, 1787.

⁸ To James Monroe, January 1, 1815.

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who would otherwise escape the public eye. The innocent are often criticized and misrepresented, but that is the price we pay for a press that serves the public by also digging up and calling to the attention of the people the misdeeds of sinners in the public service. And the number of newspapers that give the news with an approximation of impartiality and some degree of dignity is after all not discouragingly small. Publicity and the fear of publicity are wholesome forces in the body politic. A free press, even with all its abuses, is one of the necessary ingredients of democracy. Too much criticism is more wholesome than no criticism. Too much news is better than too little news.

VI

THE RADIO

THE RADIO is a channel of communication which, although hardly out of its swaddling clothes, is recognized as one of the most important factors in the formation of public opinion. It is an instrumentality that makes possible a powerful appeal to great masses of the people, in spite of the fact that it lacks the personal effectiveness of more direct contact between speaker and listeners. The propagandists have seized upon it, of course, to further the causes they champion. Whether there should be complete freedom allowed in the use of the radio to all who have a cause to present or ideas to put across is a question on which there is considerable disagreement. Different countries have solved the problem in different ways. In the United States, the theory that freedom of speech should prevail is generally accepted. This is in harmony with American traditions, and the realization of freedom of speech would seem to be most healthful for the democratic system that is American.

George Bernard Shaw has listed a number of differences made by the radio in the relation between the speaker and his audience. In the first place, the audience is tremendously enlarged. Then, the millions who may be listening do so in comfort at home, always with the knowledge that they can switch over to a concert or to another speaker if they lose interest. The speaker can address them "intimately and cosily, without the physical effort of a platform drive to the gallery," and he can use delicate shades of expression that would not be effective

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in a public hall. And, Mr. Shaw continues, "I can speak without risk of interruptions, missiles, stink bombs, patriotic songs, suffragettes, or having the platform rushed by a lynching mob." The listener also has advantages. Supposedly he is "protected from imposture, carelessness, thoughtlessness, insincere phrasemaking, drunkenness, and humbug by a detective of magical efficiency." If the speaker evades issues and talks on and on without saying anything, the listener will be lulled into a harmless sleep from which he will awaken only when a voice from the radio announces the succeeding program.¹

One of the most important changes brought about by radio is the increase in the number of people who can be reached at a given time with information or propaganda. There are more than 30,000,000 radio sets in the United States alone, and the potential radio audience is estimated at approximately 80,000,000 people.² Although other countries do not have so many radios as the United States, the number is great enough to afford an opportunity for a large proportion of the population to hear broadcasts. And in Germany, particularly, the political pressure is great enough to get nearly everyone into the radio audience when important propaganda is being broadcast. In all countries, the radio affords millions of people at one time an opportunity to hear appeals and propaganda and information on subjects of current interest. It must undoubtedly act as a medium for the acceleration of the speed with which public opinion develops.

We have no way of telling just how much public opinion is influenced by radio. A representative of the Columbia Broadcasting System recently raised a question as to the extent of radio influence on opinion, and his answer was, "It is anybody's

¹ Bernard Shaw, "The Telltale Microphone," *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. VI (1935), 465, 466.

² Franklin Dunham, "Democracy and the Radio," *Public Opinion In a Democracy*, supplement to *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, January, 1938, 77.

guess.”³ We do know that this influence is considerable. H. V. Kaltenborn, one of the most highly respected news commentators, has written, “Radio is the most potent weapon ever placed in the hands of a dictator. There is no more effective propaganda instrument.”⁴ Although the radio is not used either as intensively or as extensively in the United States as a propaganda medium as it is in the dictatorships, the thousands of dollars spent for broadcasting time by the political parties during campaigns and by commercial advertisers all the time, along with the jealousy frequently manifested over the control of radio, testify to the value set on it as a medium of approach to public opinion in a democracy.

As a channel of communication, radio has both strong and weak points. The voice coming over the radio is more interesting and persuasive, and more personal than the written word. However, broadcasting lacks the permanence of what is printed. The reader can turn back and read again when he desires to refresh his memory or clear up a point in doubt, but the listener cannot make the announcer repeat what has been said. The radio also finds it necessary to cater to the tastes of the average person, whereas the reader can pick the printed material that suits his taste. On the other hand, the radio voice possesses an intimacy that the printed page lacks. The listener may also have a sense of social participation as he realizes that many others are listening to the same voice that he hears. Probably more people will listen than read. On the whole, we may conclude with the psychologists that “radio is potentially more effective than print in bringing about concerted opinion and action.”⁵

³ Sterling Fisher, “The Radio and Public Opinion,” *Public Opinion in a Democracy*, supplement to *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, January, 1938, 79.

⁴ H. V. Kaltenborn, “An American View of European Broadcasting,” *Radio: The Fifth Estate, The Annals*, Vol. CLXXVII (1935), 77.

⁵ Hadley Cantril and Gordon W. Allport, *The Psychology of Radio*, 18. Harper & Brothers.

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When broadcasting first became common, the assertion was often made that it would do away with speech-making directly to crowds. Presidential candidates would no longer tour the country, but would stay at home and make front-porch or fire-side campaigns instead. This prediction has not been realized. In 1936, both President Roosevelt and Governor Landon toured the country, and took the microphone with them. Crowds were always anxious to see them and hear them speak, even though they had to stand in the rain to do so. In 1938, W. Lee O'Daniel, a man who had become widely known in Texas as a radio speaker, was a candidate for governor of the state. Although he had won popularity as a radio speaker, and presumably was an adept at the art, he did not depend upon broadcasting to win his campaign. He toured the state with a sound truck. The evidence indicates that broadcasting has not destroyed the value of personal speeches and direct contact with the people. Handshaking and baby-kissing are not yet obsolete.

Radio lacks the personal touch and the interaction between speaker and audience that is present in face-to-face assemblages. The audience likes to see the speaker and get the effect of his personality by watching him as well as by listening to him. The listener in an audience also responds to the speaker by various actions, such as clapping or smiling or by other facial expressions. This in turn affects the speaker. A sympathetic audience stimulates him. Listening over the radio is easier for the listener. He can sit in an easy chair with his shirt off and smoke if he likes, or be otherwise informal, but he finds the public meeting more interesting and more attractive. The very fact that there is more formality, as well as the visible presence of the speaker, tends to make the listener more alert and more critical than when he listens to a broadcast. The only advantage that radio offers over the public meeting as a medium

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for affecting public opinion seems to be that it makes possible a vastly increased audience.

The effectiveness of the radio as a vivid medium of communication was dramatically illustrated on October 31, 1938, when, during the course of a play that was being broadcast over a coast-to-coast network, realistic "announcements" were made that a cylinder from Mars had landed in New Jersey and that strange creatures armed with death rays were emerging to open war on the inhabitants of the earth. Widespread panic resulted, despite the fact that the play had been announced in the regular way and had been listed in the newspaper schedules of programs. Telephone lines were swamped by calls from people trying to verify the reports or asking how best to safeguard themselves from the terror. Physicians and nurses volunteered their services to aid the injured. Many people fled from their homes. When the truth became generally known, the popular feeling of resentment was so great that politicians and radio authorities talked of punitive action against those responsible for the program. The chief significance of the incident is in its revelation of the importance of radio in the lives of the people. The personal touch of voices coming over the air to people already conditioned to war broadcasts from Europe led thousands of listeners to accept a most fantastic drama as being real. No other medium of communication could have done it, which perhaps illustrates the relative immaturity of radio as well as its power. When radio becomes a more established factor in life, the people will be less credulous in accepting different kinds of broadcasts as true.

Of course, one never knows how large the audience is or what mood it is in. Broadcasters assert that the radio has spread a knowledge of political issues and noticeably increased interest in campaigns. As evidence, they point to the marked increase in the number of votes cast at each Presidential election

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since the radio came into use. They picture the electorate at home, listening intently to campaign speeches and digesting the arguments unswayed by the mob emotions aroused at political rallies. Many people do listen, but radio fans not infrequently write to the broadcasting companies to complain if their favorite entertainment is interfered with by a political speech. The candidate would be conceited indeed who would presume that he could compete for popularity with Charlie McCarthy or Amos and Andy. *The Nation* described the feeling of listeners when President Hoover took a popular comedian's time in 1932 as follows:

Even Americans will rebel if things go too far. At eight-thirty on a recent evening the populace of the United States, respectful if dubious, tuned in on Mr. Hoover's portentous speech in Iowa. At nine-thirty, accustomed to the prompt intervention of the omnipotent announcer, the listeners confidently awaited the President's concluding words. Confidently and also impatiently; for at nine-thirty on every Tuesday evening Mr. Ed Wynn comes on the air. But Mr. Hoover had only arrived at point number two of his twelve-point program. The populace shifted in its myriad seats; wives looked at husbands; children, allowed to remain up till ten on Tuesdays, looked in alarm at the clock; twenty thousand votes shifted to Franklin Roosevelt. Nine-forty-five: Mr. Hoover had arrived at point four; five million Americans consulted their radio programs and discovered that Ed Wynn's time had not been altered or canceled; two million switched off their instruments and sent their children to bed weeping; votes lost to Mr. Hoover multiplied too fast for computation. Ten o'clock: the candidate solemnly labored point number seven; too late to hope for even a fragment of Ed Wynn. What did the N. B. C. mean by this outrage? Whose hour was it anyhow? Ten million husbands and wives retired to bed in a mood of bitter rebellion; no votes left for Hoover. Did the Republican National Committee pay for the half hour thus usurped by its candidate? If so, we can assure it that \$5,000 was never less well spent.⁶

⁶ *The Nation*, Vol. CXXXV (1932), 341

In the earlier days of radio, the claim was made that it would eliminate demagogues. Many of the tricks of demagoguery seemed to be ineffective over the radio. Time was too expensive to be wasted on other than well-prepared speeches with solid content. Major General J. G. Harbord (retired), for some time president of the Radio Corporation of America, wrote in 1929 that radio cooled the magnetism of the orator and eliminated mob feeling from the audience. Although he might be one of thirty millions in the audience, he was "free from the contagion of the crowd" and moved only by the logic of the issue that the orator presented. Thus would the threat of demagoguery to democracy be removed.⁷

We know now that such predictions were overly optimistic. The radio has not done away with demagoguery and the emotional appeal. It has brought about merely a modification in technique. Hitler and the other demagogues of Europe have found the radio a most effective instrument to further their causes. In the dictatorships, they have the advantage of having no competition. But the emotional appeal is used with powerful effect in the United States, where the air waves are open to almost all comers. Huey Long had the art of winning his radio audience as he won those who saw him face to face. He aroused the interest of his listeners and spoke to them with appealing informality. Father Coughlin proved to be a radio orator who could arouse his listeners and flood Washington with letters enough to give many a congressman nightmares of apprehension. In 1938, a radio flour salesman beat the politicians of Texas and won the Democratic nomination for governor by a surprising majority. His platform was: more industries for the state, a monthly pension of thirty dollars per month for persons over sixty-five, the Ten Commandments, and the Golden Rule. The day when political speeches will be only

⁷ J. G. Harbord, "Radio and Democracy," *The Forum*, Vol. LXXXI (1929), 215.

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logical and intellectual and the listeners keenly analytic and interested only in reason has not yet dawned.

However, it is true that there is not so much crowd influence in radio as in face-to-face meetings. This may be partially overcome if the orator reminds his audience of the large number of sympathetic listeners and builds up a sense of participation and group power, as Father Coughlin did. Even if this is possible, the radio speaker still finds himself subject to certain limitations. Emotional appeals of the crowd-stirring type are less effective than when the speaker and his crowd are face to face. The speaker must be more direct and more concrete than when he is on the platform. He must avoid long speeches and be more informal and conversational. He cannot depend upon crowd demonstrations of enthusiasm to heighten the effect of his appeals, although he may try to get some effect of this nature by having a studio audience that claps and cheers at appropriate intervals. As a result, his approach will tend to resemble that of a salesman rather than of the traditional spellbinder.⁸

One very great contribution radio makes to the public good where freedom of speech is allowed is the opportunity it affords a speaker to speak directly to an audience of millions of people without editorial criticism, distortion, or deletion. A notable example may be found in the case of Mr. Justice Black. After the furor raised by the newspapers when he was appointed to the Court, over the question of his connection with the Ku Klux Klan, he refused to discuss the matter with newspaper reporters, on the ground that their papers might distort or criticize his statement or refuse to publish it in full. He went directly to the people by radio with his explanation. President Roosevelt has also found the radio a useful channel through which he could approach the people directly at times when the press was

⁸ Hadley Cantril and Gordon W. Allport, *The Psychology of Radio*, 31. Harper & Brothers.

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predominantly hostile. Millions of people listen on such occasions and resultant opinions will be more soundly based because there has been a direct report from their political leaders.

Advocates of different kinds of causes have found radio a useful instrument for spreading their propaganda. In the United States, the propaganda of commercial advertisers is that which assails the ears of listeners most regularly. The supposed virtues of particular brands of coffee, radio receiving sets, soup, hand lotion, and quack remedies are related in as much detail as it is supposed the public will bear, music and other kinds of entertainment being offered between sales talks as bait. During political campaigns, the politicians take to the air with their propaganda. The standard devices of propaganda are used by radio very much as they are used in print and on assembled audiences. Slogans, repetition, identification of a cause with the common people, the appeal to prevailing prejudices, suppression and distortion of the facts are all used in radio propaganda. Magic words, such as "home," "mother," "Americanism," "the Constitution," "health," and "purity," are effective in arousing favorable attitudes and may be used by propagandists for everything from breakfast foods to Presidential candidates.

A good illustration of the use of propaganda technique is to be found in the talks made by Henry Ford's publicity agent in the Ford Sunday Evening Hour. Six minutes out of each hour of symphonic music are devoted to these talks. Although the major networks declare that it is their policy not to sell time to commercial sponsors for propaganda on controversial topics, the Ford Motor Company has been able to broadcast propaganda for Mr. Ford's conception of what would lead to the good life. A philosophy of individualism and devotion to the competitive system runs through the talks. Magic words, such as "American principles," "freedom," "initiative," "industry,"

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"truth," and "loyalty," are used in talks that are delivered in a style that bears a close resemblance to a certain kind of pulpit oratory. The great achievements of business are pictured as a romantic saga. The wisdom of business men is contrasted with the stupidity and selfishness of political leaders. Business men and engineers are the heroes, writers and politicians are the villains, of these discourses. Henry Ford is pictured as a common ordinary American full of the ancient virtues and relatively uninterested in making great profits. He wants to create jobs and raise wages. Some of the talks contain more obvious propaganda than others, but all are designed to fit into a program for selling Henry Ford's ideas to the nation, and they make skillful use of tested techniques.⁹

In time of war, radio will be commandeered by the government for national propaganda and organization work. It offers the government direct access to the ear of the whole people through a channel that was not available in any country during the World War. The entire population can be brought within the sound of a single voice. And as one writer has said, "There are times in war when a nation-wide 'pep' talk might turn the tide of battle by bolstering morale."¹⁰

Internationally, the radio also has high significance. Owen D. Young recently declared, "In 1938 it has become a problem, especially in Europe, to insulate the public of any country from the public opinion of any other."¹¹

Originally it was hoped that this new avenue of intercommunication between nations would lead to a better understanding among the different peoples and contribute to the cause of international peace. Sir Eric Drummond, then Secretary-General of the League of Nations, expressed this op-

⁹ *Propaganda Analysis*, July, 1938.

¹⁰ Orrin E. Dunlap, Jr., "Words With a Sting", *New York Times*, October 11, 1936.

¹¹ *New York Times*, July 17, 1938.

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timistic belief in 1926, when he hailed the radio as an "enormous new force that makes for better understanding between peoples" and thus works for the maintenance of peace. He said: "The full development of radio must render international co-operation, and therefore the task of the League, infinitely easier."¹²

Actually, the result has thus far been used as an international irritant. Italy has broadcast incendiary material to fan the flames of Arab dissatisfaction with British rule. Germany prepared the way for her absorption of Austria by radio attacks, and constantly broadcasts propaganda to the people of German blood outside her borders. Italian stations have broadcast "news" in at least twelve different languages. Indicative of the use made of radio in the international field was a news item in *The New York Times* of February 10, 1938, headed **BRITAIN SPEEDS RADIO FOR SOUTH AMERICA**, which began by saying, "Great Britain is speeding preparations for broadcasts soon to South America to combat Italian and German propaganda in that field, which it is feared is hurting British prestige and trade." Two days later, the *Times* carried an item saying that the United States had projects on foot designed "to meet the inroads of Fascist propaganda in South America." The report, under a Washington date-line, said, "The things immediately in the planning state here largely involve radio, which appears strongest in the appeals being made by these other nations. [Germany, Italy, and Japan]" It was also suggested that a feeling prevailed "among the more sensitive Latin Americans that the United States has abandoned them to the propaganda of Fascist countries with little effort of its own to counteract it."

The propaganda with which nation after nation is flooding the air as it strives to reach the ear of the people of other coun-

¹² Quoted in W. Brooke Graves, *Readings in Public Opinion*, 548. D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc.

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tries is often disguised as news bulletins or informational talks on cultural, economic, and international subjects. The international public relations men use the same scientific approach that their brothers use in domestic propaganda.

Turning back to the relation of the radio to domestic affairs, we find that although all nations recognize the public importance of radio, not all have dealt with it in the same way. The two main problems that confront a nation in this connection are the method of management and control to be adopted and the extent to which freedom of speech shall be allowed. These problems are, of course, closely related. In dealing with them, three main types of approach have been worked out, examples of which may be found in Germany, Great Britain, and the United States.

In Germany, the broadcasting stations are owned and operated by the government through the Post Office Department. Programs are supplied by a state-owned company controlled by the Minister of Propaganda, Dr. Goebbels. He appoints, and may dismiss, the directors of the company as well as directors in charge of regional stations. The source of revenue is a license fee collected from owners of receiving sets.¹⁸

There are thirty-eight party regions in Germany, with a regional radio officer in charge of each. Under them are a thousand districts, with a sub-officer in charge of each district. It is the business of these officials to see that the people listen to certain broadcasts. When community listening is ordered, they make sure that every school, factory, and public square is equipped with receivers. In particular, when Hitler speaks, factory employees assemble, shops are closed, traffic practically ceases, and crowds gather around the loud speakers to listen.

¹⁸ Information in this and the following paragraph is from Ivor Thomas, "Systems of Broadcasting," *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. VI (1935), 493-5.

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Since the radio officers keep in close touch with the people, it is not easy for a German to escape at such times.

The Germans frankly recognize the radio as a propaganda agency of the government. No view out of harmony with Nazi philosophy can be expressed. The director of the German broadcasting system has written: "It was an event of fundamental importance that National Socialism made the radio the all-embracing instrument for proclaiming its theses which were to be binding for everybody. . . . In the new Germany, National Socialism and broadcasting have become one insoluble unit." He concluded by referring to the radio as "the towering herald" of National Socialism and the New Germany "on this and the other side of the borders."¹⁴ The Director of the Radio Branch of the Propaganda Ministry told H. V. Kaltenborn a few years ago, "we use phonograph records in broadcasting current events in order that we may first eliminate what we consider unsuitable."¹⁵ The government also encourages the sale of inexpensive receiving sets among the people. In line with this policy, one of the first steps taken by Propaganda Minister Goebbels after the annexation of Austria was the sending of 20,000 inexpensive radio sets to that country, to be distributed among the poorer classes.¹⁶

In Great Britain, radio broadcasting is a monopoly of the British Broadcasting Corporation, a government owned organization created by act of Parliament. It is controlled by seven governors appointed for five-year terms. The number of governors may be increased or decreased by order in council. The power of appointment is vested in the Crown and "is exercised

¹⁴ Horst Dressel-Andress, "German Broadcasting," *Radio: The Fifth Estate, The Annals*, Vol. CLXXVII (1935), 62, 65.

¹⁵ H. V. Kaltenborn, "An American View of European Broadcasting", *Radio: The Fifth Estate, The Annals*, Vol. CLXXVII (1935), 76.

¹⁶ *New York Times*, March 20, 1938.

presumably by the Postmaster-General in consultation with the Prime Minister." The Postmaster General also has a certain amount of control over the Corporation. It must not broadcast any matter that he desires to exclude, and he can revoke its license if it fails to observe the conditions of the charter or license under which it operates. The financial support of the Corporation also comes through the Post Office Department, being derived from a license fee paid by the owners of receiving sets and collected by this department.¹⁷

Although the Government—that is, the Cabinet—legally possesses almost complete power over the British Broadcasting Corporation, actually the Corporation is quite independent in its day-to-day administration. The Postmaster General takes the position that he is responsible for questions of general policy but not of detail, and this is the accepted attitude in Parliament. On one occasion, the Speaker of the House of Commons called a member to order for attacking the Government for allowing a certain commentator to broadcast; and said the Speaker: "The Government are not responsible for the B.B.C. organization . . . therefore it is hardly in order for the honourable and gallant member to raise the matter in this detail." Although the Government undoubtedly exercises considerable influence over the Corporation, it is meant to be, and in practice is, largely autonomous and substantially independent of both Parliament and the Government in regard to ordinary administrative matters.

A considerable amount of free speech prevails. Certainly the radio is not used as a propaganda machine as Germany and other totalitarian states use it. Both Government and Opposition speakers are allotted time during political campaigns. However, the Labor Party has expressed dissatisfaction because

¹⁷ Information in this and the two following paragraphs is from William A. Robson, *Public Enterprise*, Chapter IV. George Allen & Unwin.

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pro-Government spokesmen were given more time than their speakers. The bias of Broadcasting House authorities is also reflected occasionally in their refusal to allow certain speakers access to the microphone. A well-known case was that of Mr. Vernon Bartlett, a successful news commentator on foreign affairs, whose contract with the Corporation was terminated because of remarks that he made concerning Germany leaving the League of Nations and the situation in Austria at that time. Mr. Bartlett's comments had aroused considerable controversy in Parliament and were considered by many people to be indiscreet. The broadcasting authorities then proceeded to remove him from the picture so far as their medium of communication was concerned. The Corporation is free to choose its speakers and entertainers, and this situation is subject to abuse. This is an inherent weakness of any monopolistic control of a channel of communication.

On the whole, the British are, as might be expected, quite well satisfied with their system. Probably most of them would agree with the author of an article in the scholarly *Political Quarterly*, in 1935, who discussed the systems prevailing in all the leading countries of the world. He was of the opinion that broadcasting reached its depths in countries where private ownership prevails. As to France, where private ownership exists side by side with government ownership, he said the French programs were "deplorable." The system of the totalitarian states was, of course, unsuitable for the British. The conclusion was that there was "little for the B. B. C. to learn."¹⁸

However, some Englishmen are not so well satisfied. Dr. William A. Robson has critically called attention to the overwhelmingly Conservative composition of the board of governors. Most of the members have been elderly Conservative

¹⁸ Ivor Thomas, "Systems of Broadcasting," *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. VI (1935), 489-505.

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politicians. If Dr. Robson had written in the irreverent style of some American authors, he might have referred to them as the "Seven Old Men." The combination of age and overwhelmingly Conservative outlook has made the board unreflective of public opinion.¹⁹

The policy of the Broadcasting Corporation has been to give the people what is good for them, not necessarily what they may want. This attitude has called forth some criticism. After alluding to the sentiment prevailing in Parliament that British broadcasting was the best in the world, one English writer declared that if this were true, "there must be some sorry stuff about." After admitting that the British system had its virtues, he went on to say: "But it has its weaknesses and some of its programmes latterly have had a dreariness beyond belief out of England. . . . British broadcasting may be the most grandmotherly in the world, but surely we are not going to boast about it."²⁰

In the United States, radio broadcasting stations are privately owned, but they are licensed by the Federal Government and subject to its regulation. The agency through which control is exercised is the Federal Communications Commission, an administrative board composed of seven members appointed by the President of the United States. The Commission is authorized to classify radio stations and prescribe the nature of service to be rendered by each class and each station. It is empowered to grant, suspend, or revoke licenses in the public interest, convenience, or necessity. The law provides that no license shall be granted irrevocably for a period of more than five years. The Commission has made it a practice to grant licenses for periods of only six months.

The Federal Communications Act attempts to guarantee free

¹⁹ William A. Robson, *Public Enterprise*, 86, 87. George Allen & Unwin.

²⁰ H. L. Beales, "The B. B. C.," *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. VII (1936), 524.

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speech, except that "obscene, indecent, or profane language" is prohibited. It provides that "If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station," and that the licensee "shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section." However, a licensee can refuse to allow the use of its station to all candidates. In order to guard against censorship by the Communications Commission, the act provides that it shall have no power to promulgate regulations or fix conditions "which shall interfere with the right of free speech by means of radio communication."

In order to arrive at any real understanding of radio broadcasting in the United States, one must go beyond the law to find out how it actually works. Among the important features that must be considered are: the ownership and sources of control over radio, the limitations on free speech that apply in practice, and various points of strength and weakness in the American system that have been pointed out from time to time by observers and critics.

The control of broadcasting is largely in the hands of three great chains, the National Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the Mutual Broadcasting System. The National Broadcasting Company is a subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America, a corporation on whose board the Morgan, Mellon, and Rockefeller interests are all represented. The Columbia Broadcasting System is controlled by the Paley Family (whose wealth came from the cigar manufacturing industry), and by banking interests. The Mutual Broadcasting System, which is not so large as the other two, is co-operatively owned by the stations who belong to it. These three systems control almost every high-powered station and

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practically every clear channel in the United States. Although there are approximately seven hundred stations in the country and considerably less than half of them are affiliated with the networks of the three systems, those affiliated with the networks have more than 90 per cent of the total transmission power. Broadcasting is thus in the hands of "big business," and the three great systems have almost a monopoly.

A great deal has been said in the United States about free speech on the radio. Statesmen, educators, and officials of the great chains have stressed its desirability. Mr. William S. Paley, president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, has said that "broadcasting as an instrument of American democracy must forever be wholly, honestly and militantly nonpartisan." It "must never have an editorial page."²¹ A poll completed by the American Institute of Public Opinion in February, 1938, indicated that 59 per cent of the people who owned receiving sets were opposed to government censorship. Actually, a number of factors operate to limit freedom of speech.

In the first place, there is the editorial censorship of the broadcasters. Despite the law that requires stations to allow equal facilities to candidates for public office, Station WIRE of Indianapolis in 1936 refused to accept an NBC broadcast by Earl Browder, the Communist candidate for president. During the same campaign, when a debate between Mr. Browder and Republican Congressman Hamilton Fish was broadcast by CBS, the fourteen stations of the New England Yankee Network refused to carry Browder's speech but broadcast Mr. Fish's reply.

Although radical speakers are most likely to run afoul of such editorial censorship, they are not the only ones who feel it. In 1936, Republican Senator Vandenberg started to carry on a "debate" in which he used an orthophonic record of President

²¹ *New York Times*, April 17, 1938.

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Roosevelt's 1932 pledges and made comments upon them. The Columbia Broadcasting System, which had been engaged to carry the debate, announced just before time for it to start that the method violated the company's rules and that the broadcast would not be allowed to go on. Then it was allowed to go on, but was cut off from about a third of the stations. The Republicans were highly indignant and demanded a re-broadcast. In response to a complaint direct to the Federal Communications Commission, the Commission replied that the law placed the selection and arrangement of broadcast programs in the public interest solely in the hands of the respective broadcasting stations and that the Commission had no power to compel a station to carry a particular program. Senator Vandenberg was not a candidate, and therefore the legal requirement that candidates be allowed equal opportunity for access to the radio did not apply to his case.

The editorial policies of the broadcasters are determined largely by the economic viewpoints of the owners, fear of the Federal Communications Commission, desire to please the advertisers, and fear of alienating listeners. In addition to the restrictions applied during political campaigns, news commentators and other speakers are regularly limited in what they may say. Many stations will not broadcast news of strikes, labor problems, or religious developments. Some editing is undoubtedly necessary because of the variation in interest value of different items, considerations of good taste, and the need for economical use of time, but the kind of editing that is done is sometimes open to serious objection.

The Government exercises an influence over broadcasting that amounts to practical censorship through the power of the Communications Commission to license or refuse to license stations, and through the fear of stations that this power will be exercised against them. David Sarnoff, president of the Radio

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Corporation of America, has said of this type of censorship:

Any attempt to impose the ordinary "blue pencil" censorship is little to be feared, because being a conspicuous violation of the right of free speech, it would arouse a storm of public protest. But what is not conspicuous, and is therefore dangerous, is the effect on the mind of the broadcaster resulting from attitudes that may be taken by the government toward stations, on matters outside the regulation of facilities.²²

The Commission has always assumed that it had a right to take into consideration the kind of programs broadcast when licensees applied for renewals. Examples of the denial of licenses or refusal to renew licenses on this ground are more numerous in the period of the Radio Commission, which preceded the Federal Communications Commission, than in the period since 1934, when the latter has been in control. However, the Communications Commission has not shown any indication that it intends to make a change of policy. The Radio Commission operated under a legal provision for free speech identical with the one that purports to limit the power of the present Communications Commission.

Several cases illustrate the type of regulation practiced. The Socialist station, WEVD, was granted a renewal of license in 1931 only after vigorous protests prevented the Commission from taking the station off the air. Station WCFL, operated by the Chicago Federation of Labor, obtained permission to broadcast during the desirable hours after six o'clock in the evening only after two years of proceedings and after powerful popular and political pressure had been brought to bear in its behalf. In 1931, a station operated by the pastor of Trinity Church of Los Angeles was denied a renewal of license. The pastor had been overly zealous in denouncing by name certain organizations, local officials, political parties, and various indi-

²² *New York Times*, May 1, 1938, Section X.

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viduals whom he regarded as moral enemies of society or foes of law enforcement.²³

The short period of six months for which licenses are granted makes the broadcasters particularly vulnerable to government influence. They do some censoring themselves to avoid offending the Communications Commission. They also pay close attention to the public statements and speeches by Commissioners, who occasionally use this method of giving them advice as to policies they should pursue.

Another form of censorship is exercised by the listening public. Every station desires to attract a large group of listeners. It follows that the protests of a considerable number of listeners or the fear of such protests may exercise a powerful force in determining what will be broadcast. In order to please as many people as possible, the broadcasters fit their programs to the average intelligence and taste and avoid subjects likely to offend any important group. For instance, hardly any station will broadcast talks on the subject of birth control, mainly for fear of offending Catholics.

The public expects, and a vocal element demands, more restraint over freedom of speech broadcast by radio than over newspapers or speech directed to a congregated audience. The theaters can show pictures of Mae West, the Communists can publish a newspaper, and the Ford Motor Company can advertise Ford cars and people do not object. Those who want to see Mae West shows can see them. Those who prefer Shirley Temple can see her shows. But when the anti-Mae West element sitting in their own homes with their children listening to the radio hear the voice of Mae West coming in with an unecclesiastical interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve, they feel that they have been imposed upon. The Communist

²³ For a fuller discussion of this subject, see Ruth Brindze, *Not to be Broadcast*, Chapter VII. Vanguard Press, Inc.

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can read *The Daily Worker* while the capitalistic solid citizen on the other side of town reads the *Chicago Tribune* or the *Herald Tribune* or *The New York Times* or some other paper congenial to his tastes. But if anything that sounds like Communist propaganda comes out of the radio, a great many solid citizens will hear it in anger or trepidation. Those who are devoted to rugged individualism can read magazines or newspapers or hear speeches reflecting that viewpoint and be happy and nobody objects, but the collectivist resents the unctuous propaganda which the voice of Henry Ford's publicity agent brings into his living room as the attractive, and generally innocent, music of the Ford Sunday Evening Hour is halted for a message glorifying the good old ways of doing things. When the most vociferous citizens hear things they do not like, they write letters of protest, and if enough letters of protest come in, the broadcasting company takes steps to prevent a repetition of the offense.

Advertisers also exert a considerable influence on the nature of material broadcast. In the first place, since the support of broadcasting comes from advertisers, station owners are careful to avoid sending out programs that will be offensive to them. An example of such influence was the refusal of a network to allow one of its speakers to advocate support of the Tugwell-Copeland bill, which would have strengthened the pure food and drug laws. Such a talk was held to be too "controversial."²⁴

Another way in which advertisers affect programs is through their own censorship of the programs sent out under their sponsorship. For example Alexander Woollcott was engaged to make talks for a program sponsored by Cream of Wheat. He became a very popular columnist, but in 1935 he made a number

²⁴ Hadley Cantril and Gordon W. Allport, *The Psychology of Radio*, 55. Harper & Brothers.

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of caustic remarks about Hitler and Mussolini and discussed other subjects in a way that the makers of Cream of Wheat feared would offend large groups of customers. Mr. Woolcott was then notified that if he did not quit talking about controversial subjects, his program would be discontinued. When he refused to accede to this request, Cream of Wheat dropped him.²⁵ The advertisers censor to avoid making enemies among prospective buyers.

The attitude of the men who control the great broadcasting companies toward the whole question of censorship is that they themselves do not interfere with free speech and that government censorship is a dangerous evil that must be carefully avoided. David Sarnoff, of the Radio Corporation of America, has declared that the steady enlargement of the economic power of the Federal Government makes increasingly important the maintenance of freedom of thought and the "defense of the freedom of all forms of its expression." Broadcasting "should be made morally as well as legally certain of its freedom from program censorship, other than the legitimate censorship of public opinion." In order to lessen the possibility of indirect censorship, the present practice of granting licenses for periods of only six months should be changed. Licenses should be granted for a longer period and be revocable only for causes clearly defined in advance.²⁶

A spokesman for the Columbia Broadcasting System has stated that the policy of radio is "to present as many important and varied views as possible" on developments of public interest and significance. In so doing, he said, radio tries to avoid taking sides when it is determining what shall go on the air. This was illustrated by the course followed by the Columbia Broadcasting System in connection with the controversy over enlarging the

²⁵ Ruth Brindze, *Not to be Broadcast*, 110, 111. Vanguard Press, Inc.

²⁶ *New York Times*, May 1, 1938, Section X.

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Supreme Court and in regard to the Far Eastern conflict. More than seventy speakers were presented on the Supreme Court issue, and at the end of the struggle, the two sides lacked but fifteen minutes of having had a perfect balance of time. In the Far Eastern conflict, where more varied interests were involved, Columbia attempted to hold the balance by putting on an equal number of Chinese and Japanese officials along with a number of neutral newspaper men and other observers.²⁷

Like most big businesses, the broadcasters desire to operate with a minimum of government regulation. Their emphasis on the importance of free speech and their own alleged non-partisanship springs from this desire. Expert public relations men guide their defense moves, and as a further measure of precaution they have sometimes given executive positions to men with good political connections. One of the ablest members of the Radio Commission resigned from that body to accept a position as head of the department of station relations for Columbia. Another former radio commissioner, a Harvard classmate of President Roosevelt, was placed in charge of Columbia's Washington station, WJSV, in 1933. In 1938, when public and congressional criticism of radio reached a point where it seemed likely to lead to governmental investigation and perhaps to new tax or regulatory measures, the National Broadcasting Company hired Edward L. Bernays, one of the ablest publicity men in the country, as public relations consultant. The National Association of Broadcasters also took on three new publicity men, and plans were made for the appointment of a high salaried "czar" of broadcasting to put the industry's house in order and lead in a fight against "the enemies of radio."

When the American system of radio ownership and control is compared with the systems of other countries, certain disad-

²⁷ Sterling Fisher, "The Radio and Public Opinion," *Public Opinion in a Democracy*. Supplement to *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, January, 1938, 79, 80.

vantages and advantages are readily revealed. Studies made by the United States Office of Education and the National Committee on Education by Radio indicate that there is more dissatisfaction among listeners in the United States than there is among listeners anywhere else in the world.²⁸ This does not necessarily mean that the American people would be satisfied with the European radio systems, but it does indicate that American broadcasting is in need of radical improvement.

The chief objections to American radio center around the part played by advertisers and their advertisements. Since the advertisers furnish the money that pays for broadcasting, the commercial broadcasters are chiefly interested in building audiences to sell to advertisers. The business is a commercial undertaking, the chief concern of which is to make profits. The general level of the programs offered is low, and radio advertising not infrequently interrupts the programs so often that it destroys much of the listener's pleasure in the good features. H. V. Kaltenborn tells us that the absence of advertising from broadcasting in certain European countries "makes possible the presentation of a higher average of cultural material."²⁹ In the United States, the radio has become, as one caustic critic said, "a blatant signboard erected in the living room." Ballyhoo for hand lotions, radio receiving sets, refrigerators, and quack medicines, fantastic claims for breakfast foods designed for the credulous ears of children, along with generally mediocre programs is perhaps a rather high price to pay for admission to the "free" programs.

Other faults found with American radio include the charge that there are too many stations, that the air is overcrowded in some localities particularly. Stations are located where it is sup-

²⁸ Armstrong Perry, "Weak Spots in the American System of Broadcasting," *Radio: The Fifth Estate, The Annals*, Vol. CLXXVII (1935), 23.

²⁹ H. V. Kaltenborn, "An American View of European Broadcasting," *Radio: The Fifth Estate, The Annals*, Vol. CLXXVII (1935), 74.

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posed they will be most profitable commercially and without regard to public service. The complaint is also made that the Federal licensing authorities have allowed the big companies to grab the best hours, kilocycles, and kilowatts. The best hours of the day are sold by the broadcasters to the advertisers. Finally, there is fairly general agreement that the six months licensing period is unreasonably short and gives the Communications Commission a power of indirect censorship that it should not have.

On the other hand, there are certain ways in which American radio is superior to that of other countries. In the first place, American listeners have a greater variety of programs to choose from. They generally have an opportunity to choose any one of the three expensive programs broadcast by the great chains, or make a choice from a number of programs coming from local stations. They can hear more programs at all hours of the day than the listeners of any other country in the world. American radio is also technically at least as efficient as that of any other country.

Perhaps most important of all is the comparatively large degree of freedom of speech on public questions which prevails in American radio. In spite of all the different kinds of censorship, direct and indirect, which impose limitations on broadcasting in the United States, radio is much more free here than in the countries of Europe. Even Englishmen are horrified at the thought of the freedom of access to the air that political insurgents and radicals, whom they consider demagogues, have in the United States. In Great Britain and other democratic countries of Europe where opposition parties are allowed some access to the air, they are carefully hedged about with restrictions.

As a channel of communication with a breadth of influence hardly equalled by any other, radio possesses great powers for

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good or evil. In the dictatorships, its chief use is avowedly that of an instrument of propaganda for the party in power. In the democracies, the question is as to what degree of freedom is desirable. If radio is left free, great masses of people may be reached with the propaganda of darkness, but they may be reached just as well with the propaganda of light. Governments may presume to "protect" the people by deciding what they shall hear and what they shall not hear. That is the way of bureaucratic paternalism, but if it contributes to the general welfare, it is the way that should be followed. The advocates of freedom, however, would confine censorship to the maintenance of basic standards of morality and decency and allow the greatest freedom of discussion on public questions, on the ground that propaganda is not dangerous unless it is monopolized. They hold that the people of a democracy do not need to be bottle-fed, because a sense of discrimination and strong powers of resistance develop in a people who are exposed freely to all the varied kinds of propaganda that free discussion may bring forth.

VII

POLITICAL PARTIES

THE CONTROL of government in a country such as the United States seems very remote to the average individual. Since there are several million citizens who share the sovereignty, one man seems about as important and as powerful as a grain of sand on the ocean beach. Under such circumstances, individuals who want to influence the government find it necessary to associate with other persons who will support the same program. Only by co-operation and organization can they make their influence felt and obtain a voice in the government. Such co-operation and organization may take the form of a political party that nominates and tries to elect government officials, or of pressure groups that try to influence officials elected by the parties. Political parties are likely to be larger in membership and more general in interests than pressure groups. Parties are the organizations that work the machinery of government. It is inevitable that they should exist in a democracy, because the people are too numerous and too much occupied with the general concerns of life to choose the policies and the leaders they favor without the functioning of some such organization as the political party.

Nevertheless, parties are organs of public opinion of comparatively recent development. In the eighteenth century there was as yet no general realization that political parties were certain to develop in a democracy. Men spoke of "factions" as subversive of order and the public welfare. The propertied class who wrote the American Constitution had no conception of the vital

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part political parties were to play in the American political system. They intended to create a purely representative government where the people would have no direct part in the formulation of policies but would, like the stockholders of a modern large corporation "confine their activities to the election of a few chief officers and a board of directors and leave to these officers the whole responsibility for the formulation of policies as well as their execution."¹ Then, as now, with complete assurance and unconscious arrogance, the men of property proceeded on the assumption that their interests were synonymous with the interests of the nation. Any group that disagreed with them they called a "faction," and they felt with Washington that "the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. . . . It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection."

It turned out that the people were not content with the limited role assigned them in the "board of directors" plan of government. They wanted to have a share in the choice of policies, and formed themselves into political groups to make known their wishes with effectiveness. Political parties were never a deliberate creation of the law. They were a spontaneous growth to meet the need of the people for organized effectiveness in translating their will into action. Thomas Jefferson was one of the earliest, as well as one of the most successful, American party leaders. He saw very soon that parties were a necessary concomitant of democracy. On June 1, 1798, he wrote to John Taylor, "in every free and deliberating society, there must, from the nature of man, be opposite parties, and

¹ W. F. Willoughby, *The Government of Modern States*, 492. D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc.

violent dissensions and discords." But the conception of parties as a useful organ of democracy instead of a deplorable evil was slow in gaining general acceptance. Even John Taylor had written in 1794, "The situation of the public good, in the hands of two parties nearly poised as to numbers, must be extremely perilous. Truth is a thing, not of divisibility into conflicting parts, but of unity. Hence both sides cannot be right. Every patriot deprecates a disunion, which is only to be obviated by a national preference of one of these parties."²

Political parties have been defined in various ways. Idealists have thought of them as organizations composed of individuals who were in agreement on a body of political principles, or perhaps as Burke said, "A body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed." More realistic or more cynical writers have said that parties are composed of people combined together in order to protect their own interests, and in some instances have conceived of parties as being primarily composed of spoilsmen lusting after public office, and their gullible followers. As a matter of fact, the people who compose a party are in it for a variety of reasons. In order to give consideration to this fact, we should define a political party as a group of people working together to further certain political principles or achieve some political purpose, and who, in order to realize their aims, try to gain control of the machinery of government by putting forward and electing candidates for public office.

The political party is now recognized as a legitimate organ of public opinion in the United States. Although the party was not originally established by law, efforts have been made

² John Taylor, *A Definition of Parties; or the Political Effects of the Paper System Considered*.

from time to time to improve it by legislation and make it a more responsive agent of the people in the functions it performs. The most important of its functions may be classified as: (1) the formulation of public policies and the framing of issues for popular judgment; (2) selection or nomination of officials; (3) to act as conductors and critics of the government; (4) political education; (5) co-ordination of the activities of the different branches of government; (6) to act as intermediaries between the individual and the government, and as agencies through which groups of people may obtain governmental action favorable to their particular needs or interests. Needless to say, all of these functions are performed imperfectly.

One of the most significant contributions of parties is in giving the people a choice between different policies, or at least between personalities. When the people go to the polls to express their will on election day, they cannot express it in accurate detail on all political issues. Their will is only approximately expressed by their ballots, for they can only vote "yes" or "no" on a particular issue, or express a preference for one candidate as opposed to another. But an opportunity to choose between definite alternatives must be offered them if their decision is to have any significance. Someone must frame the issues to be submitted for the popular verdict; someone must choose the candidates to be voted upon. Is the election to be "a solemn referendum" on the League of Nations, free silver, prohibition, or the New Deal? Will the people be allowed to choose between a Bryan and a McKinley, or a Roosevelt and a Hoover? Political parties take care of these matters, and in doing so perform one of their most essential functions. Individual opinions represent a wide range of viewpoints. The party must stand for a program including measures that are desired in common by a large mass of voters, and select candi-

dates who will attract their support. They must make it possible for the people to speak with something like a definite voice instead of a "babel of discordant cries."

When a party wins an election, the responsibility of conducting the government is placed upon its representatives. The individual officeholder is responsible to the people, but the party is also responsible for him. When the Democratic party points with pride to Jefferson, Jackson, Cleveland, Wilson, and the second Roosevelt and directs barbed shafts of criticism at Hoover and Coolidge and Harding, it recognizes the fact that the sins of a party's erring leaders are a burden to be borne by the party forever, whereas its heroes may give it strength for generations after they are gone. When Republicans roll out the name of Lincoln, extol the virtues of Calvin Coolidge, and paint a dire picture of evils attendant upon Rooseveltian New Deal policies, they furnish further illustration of the fact that a party has a collective responsibility for the government conducted by its representatives. Ex-President Hoover has been blamed for many of the ills that beset the country during the depression, and for the low state to which his party fell at that time. As a matter of fact, he did not strike down the Republican party; he was merely the physician in charge when it fell very sick. But the Democrats will continue to use him as a horrible example of Republican leadership as long as the popular prejudice remains. He is a symbol of the failure of his party to deal satisfactorily with great issues that faced the government when it was in control.

The function of the party not in control of the government at any particular time is that of a critic that must constantly be on guard to protect the public welfare by calling attention to weak points in the majority program, in order that the majority may either remove them or the people be given a chance to know the facts. This function of criticism is as important as the

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actual work of conducting the government. Nothing that concerns the public welfare should be done in the dark in a democracy. Nothing should be done carelessly or arrogantly. Only a strong and healthy opposition party led by intelligent men offers an adequate safeguard against such abuses of the democratic system.

Another important contribution of parties to popular government is their work of political education. One of the greatest menaces to free institutions is popular indifference. Other countries have lost their liberties because the people were not alert to their importance, and in the United States we have been too much inclined to take the inheritance, which our ancestors won at great cost, too much for granted. If voters were left to inform themselves on political questions without organized stimulation, many would neither inform themselves nor vote, and democracy would be endangered. Fortunately, political parties furnish part of the needed stimulus. They call attention to political issues and bring about discussion by filling the newspapers with controversial material, by sending the voices of their advocates broadcast over the radio, by rallies and demonstrations, and by all the other artifices known to the masters of political strategy. Much of their propaganda is misleading, but the voter has an opportunity to be exposed to all the various points of view that may be presented. The average citizen does not remain indifferent, and he may develop a certain amount of sophistication that will make him immune to the grosser forms of misrepresentation. The party makes him think on political matters, at least on the issues that are of current interest, and perhaps even on the fundamentals of the democratic system of which he is a small but important part.

In the American system of government, political parties serve as a unifying force in a system of separated powers. The fathers of the Constitution conceived of government as a

mechanism and built it on the principle of checks and balances, but experience soon revealed that a unifying force was necessary if the system was not to be rendered futile by too frequent deadlocks. Power had been jealously dispersed for fear that tyranny would otherwise result. But government is an instrument whose purpose is to serve the people, and if its branches are to be separate, there must be a co-ordinating force that will bring them together in joint action for the common good. The political system itself did not provide the unifying element; therefore, it became necessary for political parties to furnish it by pressure from without. By a systematic control of the personnel of the executive and legislative branches under a certain amount of common discipline, the party has been able to establish a workable combination. When legislature and executive are controlled by different parties, the result is likely to be a deadlock, and the government marks time while the interests of the people wait on the next election. President Roosevelt has compared the American system of government to a three-horse team, and has suggested that all three must pull together if the field is to be plowed. Historically, the Supreme Court has been the conservative branch of the government; and although it responds to public opinion, it responds more slowly than do the other branches of the government. It does not readily come under the unifying influence of common party ties, but its power is exerted in negative form; and if the other branches work together with the approval of the people, the Court will eventually be compelled by less direct influences to follow the trend of the times, or the Constitution will be amended. Harmony must be brought into our elaborately organized political system with its divided powers if the work of government is to go on. Parties are the only regularly organized instrumentality that we have yet devised to act as the essential co-ordinating force.

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When the individual wants something from the government, he finds the party organization useful in yet another way. The government seems remote and almost out of reach. It moves in formal fashion along a prescribed path. But the party has a human touch, and its leaders are approachable. If the individual would like a job in the government service, if he has violated a speed law and desires that mercy season justice, if he has difficulty getting a license for his business, he will find it most helpful to seek the realization of his desires through the representatives of his party. A distinguished Negro leader once illustrated the point when he told how the residents of Harlem had persistently asked for improvements from the city officials without getting results. Finally they appealed to Tammany leaders and soon got the desired improvements. The city government was deaf to them, but the Democratic machine was not.

Groups of people with common interests who desire to influence the policy of the government find the party a useful channel through which to work. Advocates of a high tariff will contribute to their party war chest with reasonable assurance that their investment will yield returns if the party wins and is able to maintain good discipline. The farmers, laborers, and other economic groups have shown an increasing tendency in recent years to seek protection of their interests by supporting the political party most likely to favor them. Sometimes they act in blocs or through pressure groups that may work for bipartisan support. Under such circumstances, the bloc may replace the party as the agency through which the people influence governmental policy. But parties are the permanent and general agencies that exist as instrumentalities to be used by the mass of the people when they want to have a say in the shaping of political policies and the actions of the government.

Although political parties came into existence as a necessary instrumentality for the expression of public opinion, they tend

to become formalized, and may in time even hinder the expression of the public will. Parties have to develop great strength in order to bring about harmony in the government. They have to be strong and permanent and try to control all branches of the government over a long period of time if they hope to see their principles realized in governmental conduct. Since strength and permanence are necessary to success, individual members cannot insist upon as much responsiveness on the part of the leaders as they might otherwise desire, for fear of weakening the party. The resultant tendency has been for parties, originally created to serve as means to an end, to become ends in themselves. Allegiance to the party comes to replace adherence to principles. Perpetuation of the party's power becomes a matter of prime importance. Instead of grouping men in accordance with their views on the issues submitted to public opinion, it becomes necessary to adapt the issues to fixed groups of men. The result may be confusion of the questions of the day, with issues huddled together in a conglomerate program designed to strengthen the party rather than channel public opinion for its more effective application.

In order to win support from the largest possible number of individuals, parties must often avoid taking a definite stand on important controversial questions, and seek unity through appeals to tradition and emotions. The extra-legal organization developed to co-ordinate opinions and make them effective comes to co-ordinate individuals without much regard for opinions. The party comes to be, as one of Ibsen's characters said, "like a sausage machine; it mashes up all sorts of heads together into the same mincemeat—fatheads and blockheads, all in one mash!" The organization may grow stronger as the emphasis on principles grows fainter.

Parties originally founded on great issues and definite programs go on contending with one another after they are spirit-

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ually dead, because their members have developed loyalties and hatreds which their leaders continue to play upon. Traditions, slogans, interests, and organization remain after clean cut principles have long since passed away. There have been times when the Democratic party has seemed to be only a mummy of the body into which Thomas Jefferson breathed the breath of life, and the Republican party, while it still makes use of Lincoln's name, long ago ceased to bear much resemblance to the party called into existence by the great Emancipator. But every now and then a leader arises in the face of great issues and gives new vitality to a party that has tended to relapse into formalism. An Andrew Jackson or a Franklin D. Roosevelt brings it back to life, and for awhile makes it stand for principles that excite the enthusiastic support or opposition of the individuals who are the sovereign people.

Parties are likely to become artificial groupings of individuals. The citizen may be diverted from his duty of exercising his judgment on public questions because he may subordinate his opinions to his party loyalty. The party stereotypes opinions and offers the citizen an automatic test that he can apply in the place of his own judgment. The "regulars" make the party the custodian of their consciences, and at elections vote the ticket straight. Only in the fructifying periods when grave issues and great men bring new life to political organizations are the average voters shaken out of their grooves and into an alignment on matters of principle.

Chronic minor parties do not show a tendency to succumb to the disease of formalism that attacks major parties. They remain true to the issues that called them into existence, because their stand on these issues is the only justification for their existence. And such groups may perform a very useful function, even in a country such as the United States, where the two-party system prevails. They bring issues to public attention

when the major parties are afraid to take a stand on them; and if there is merit in the action proposed, the major parties may eventually be compelled by public opinion to take it up and enact it into law. Minor parties serve as protest groups to spread information in regard to social and economic needs that the major parties neglect. As such, they are missionaries to public opinion and agents of progress. The story of the work of the Populist party, the influence of which was seen most immediately in the acts of legislatures in the western states; the work of the Prohibition party, which was one of the factors in the temporary success of the national prohibition movement; the work of the Socialist party, which has seen numerous planks of its platform enacted into law by both national and state governments—all are familiar in a general way to every student of American history.

What should be the attitude of the intelligent and patriotic citizen toward parties? The answer is not one on which men can agree unanimously. Some have stressed the advantages of government by a strong and disciplined party, with a similar group in opposition. Under such a system, the organization in power cannot evade responsibility for its acts. The credit and the blame may be assessed by the people when the party submits its record for their verdict at the polls. The issues, in theory at least, can be clearly drawn, and the people can make a definite choice between one party and the other with some assurance that they will get what they want. If this is the desirable system, it would seem desirable that the voter should align himself with the party that stands for the principles in which he believes, as nearly as possible, and cast his votes for the party, even though he may not like some of the individual men who are its candidates. Those who accept this viewpoint believe also that the candidates who are elected should follow the party leadership even though they may have to go against their individual

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judgment to do it. Insurgent Republicans or insurgent Democrats are anathema to them. The party must stand or fall as a body, and the citizen should give his verdict on that basis.

At the other extreme may be found some good citizens who vote independently. Since they do not hold either party in very high esteem, they do not align themselves with either, but vote for the individual candidates whom they prefer. These independent voters may exert a wholesome influence on politics, because they form an undefined, but sometimes significant, group, whose support will be won by the best candidate. When the parties are of almost equal strength, a desire to win the independent voters is likely to lead to the nomination of better men than would otherwise be chosen. However, voters who are completely independent of party ties are relatively small in number, and it seems desirable that they should not be numerous enough to destroy the possibility of strong parties.

Acknowledging, as we must, that political parties are a necessary and desirable agency of democracy, we must also come to the conclusion that the citizen who is both intelligent and conscientious in his attitude toward the state will not ordinarily be a "straight ticket" voter. It is necessary in this connection to remember always that the party is a means to an end. It exists to serve the people by enabling them more effectively to translate their will into governmental action. When parties cease to stand for definite principles, there is no longer any reason why the voter should vote for the party instead of the man. And even when the parties do stand for distinct principles, the voter should remember that its candidates are the very human agencies through which those principles are to be translated into action. When the principles that he favors are advocated by a party whose candidates he dislikes, he must try to strike a happy medium between good principles and good men. If a candidate is too bad, or the party leadership in the

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hands of scoundrels, he will scratch his ticket both for the good of his country and his party, if the opposition candidate is more desirable. The citizen can be most effective if he acts through a party, if he votes in the primaries, and if he takes an active interest in its organization; but if he condones corruption or supports his party when he thinks it is wrong, he strengthens those who made it wrong, and fails in his duty to his country.

In the United States and in England, a two-party system has normally prevailed, and has been regarded by many as essential to the success of their political systems. When there are only two great parties, one will represent the majority opinion of the country, although it may do so in only an approximate way. And it should be noted that parties in such a system represent a division of the people on general issues, a division of general attitudes, rather than of opinion on specific questions. The commonly accepted attitude in the English-speaking countries is that representative government works best when this division results in an administration supported by a majority party and an opposition by a united minority party. In a multiple-party system, the representatives are more likely to reflect the different elements of public opinion, but the actions of the legislature as a whole may not reflect the will of the whole people as satisfactorily as in a two-party system. The administration must depend upon a coalition of parties for support; and in order not to alienate any one of them, it must proceed cautiously, and sometimes indecisively. Loss of support of any element in the coalition will bring the government's downfall. Under such a system, the people have a less direct share in deciding which group shall rule and which policies shall be pursued than in the two-party system. The leaders make the coalitions, and the coalitions determine the legislative policies to be pursued.

There is no simple and generally accepted explanation as to

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why the bi-party system should prevail in English-speaking countries while the multiple-party system seems to be normal in other democratic countries. The bi-party system was not an artificial contrivance established by the English because of a belief in its superiority. It grew out of the free play of political development and was transmitted to English colonies along with other institutions of the mother country. It has continued to prevail partially because its virtues have come to be appreciated by the essentially practical Anglo-Saxon peoples, but also because of tradition and because of the absence of certain burning issues which have agitated the peoples of other countries.

However, the difference between the bi-party system and the multiple-party system should not be overemphasized. In the bi-party system, compromises are made between factions before the election campaign, and the party goes into battle a federation of more or less divergent elements. In the Republican party, radical westerners may join with the economic royalists in support of a common candidate and platform, whereas in the Democratic ranks, conservative southerners work with semi-socialistic laboring elements of the East to elect a candidate chosen in a convention where they fought with each other until compromises and "deals" brought them to agreement. In the multiple-party system, the factions remain separate until after the election, and make their federations and compromise arrangements then. The difference lies in the fact that the bi-party system allows the people to choose between two opposing platforms and candidates that are put before them, whereas in the multiple-party system, the representatives chosen by the people make their coalitions and choose the officers of the government without direct approval from the people. There is also the difference that the two-party system is likely to result in greater political stability, even in a country such as England,

with a parliamentary government. The factions within the party are less autonomous and not so likely to break away as are the different party elements in a coalition.

Multiple parties are likely to develop when racial or religious or economic group issues are strongly injected into politics. Individuals consider a certain issue so important that they are unwilling to belong to a party that submerges that issue in order to appease others. Under a two-party system, the dominant desires of the majority of the people will sooner or later be enacted into law by the major parties, but the particular pet desires of any given individual will not always receive the attention or support that he may think they deserve. The multiple-party system provides satisfaction for the desire of the individual for a party made to order for his beliefs, but in times of crisis it reveals weaknesses not found in the two-party system.

The downfall of popular government in Germany is sometimes attributed to the lack of a bi-party system there. The Nazis came into power without representing a majority of the people. Although the causes of the German relapse into absolutism probably lie deeper than the weaknesses of the party system that prevailed in the democratic era, it is a fact not to be forgotten that the people in that period did not have an opportunity to choose directly between the Nazis and an opposition party, unless the presidential campaign be considered such an opportunity, and in that campaign the verdict was for Hindenburg and against Hitler. In France, the crisis of unsettled times has tended to throw the parties into coalitions before the election, and hence the people were given a chance to vote for a right or a left combination. The result has been a popular verdict somewhat similar to that in two-party systems, and a stronger and more stable government. Some issues must be kept out of politics, or submerged for the common good if men

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are to work together in defense of the principles of democratic government on which they are agreed.

Although there may be more than two important parties in a democracy, there cannot be less than two. This is a truth that has gained recognition only in the modern period. Before the rise of the western democracies, opposition groups in politics were regarded as seditious nuisances. The recognition of the function of political opposition as the work of intelligent and useful critics represents one of the most significant steps forward that has ever been made in the science of popular government. Its importance cannot be overemphasized. Freedom of opinion is the result, and freedom of the people to choose whom they wish to represent them and what policies they wish carried out, after they have heard the organized exposition of both sides of the issues that concern the public. Democracy presupposes that the people will have the right to choose, not simply the function of ratification. Naturally enough, the destruction of popular government in the dictator-governed countries has been accompanied by the destruction of opposition parties. When the people of those countries want a change, they may exert what influence they can within the party that has swallowed the state; and if that fails, they can resort only to revolution.

If parties are to contribute most to the democratic system, they should be kept closely responsive to public opinion, and they should aim to further the welfare of the whole people rather than the peculiar interests of factions. The division between parties should be clearly discernible, in order that the people will be able to render an intelligible verdict when they make their choice. We may presuppose that the division will be based on different notions as to what policies the government should pursue, and not upon differences as to the fundamental nature of the state. There are times when the existent political

system needs to be radically overhauled or destroyed, but in a democratic system there should be sufficient flexibility to allow for any popularly desired change by peaceful evolutionary methods, so that revolution is unnecessary. If the democratic system is to be stable there must be general loyalty to the principle of majority rule. As long as there is freedom of appeal to public opinion, individuals must not become impatient with the democratic process. Parties based too strictly on class lines, or religious beliefs, or racial groupings, may give rise to such bitterness that they will threaten the principle of majority rule and completely obliterate all consideration of the common welfare in the intensity of the desire of their members to further their own interests or beliefs.

James Bryce thought he saw two permanent oppositions running through the history of American parties.³ One was the opposition between those who favor a centralized government and those who favor a federalized government. The other was the opposition between those who prize individual freedom as the most important social good and those who place main emphasis on the desirability of order. The question of centralization against federalism is no longer a live issue, and "states' rights" is used now only as a slogan when it is considered useful for stimulating emotions favorable to what is really desired. But in a sense, Bryce was describing divisions between liberals and conservatives. Such a division, although not always clearly evident in the American party system, is perhaps the most satisfactory basis for political disagreement. Parties organized on such a basis will cut through class divisions, religious groups, sectional lines, and racial elements.

As a force actually aligning men in parties, economic interests have probably been more fundamental than the division between liberals and conservatives based on differences in indi-

³ *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. II, 17, 18. The Macmillan Co.

vidual temperaments. The chief political battles in the United States have been fought over issues involving the economic interests of large groups of voters, such as the power of Congress to tax, the protective tariff, slavery, free silver, and federal expenditures for relief. The division has been generally between different kinds of property interests, although at times there has been a tendency for the "have-nots" to be lined up against the "haves."

Divisions growing out of economic interests are not necessarily unrelated to divisions that spring from the differences between liberals and conservatives. The propertied classes are predominantly conservative. Those without property are inclined to favor changes that they hope will improve their condition. When different kinds of propertied groups are arrayed against one another, the group that has been least favored by the government seems most liberal because it advocates change, but this may be only a limited liberalism of the moment. Since the Civil War, the farmers of the United States have generally felt that the government was controlled by industrial interests. This has led the agricultural sections of the country to be often in revolt. Their leaders have favored changes in policy that have caused them to be labeled as liberal or even radical. Actually the farming groups are fundamentally conservative. In practical politics, liberalism and conservatism are often closely linked with economic interests. Change comes faster at some times than at others, depending upon the extent to which the relatively underprivileged are able to modify the conditions that have made privileges safe for the relatively privileged.

We are coming to see now that any party that expects to gain widespread support in the United States must be quite liberal in its social and economic program if we judge by standards of a generation ago. Under modern conditions, the individualism

of the old order is obsolete and collectivism is inevitable. In England, the Conservatives have already realized that, and they have carried out some of the greatest social reforms of the post-war period in their country. As Governor Lehman, of New York, said in 1934, "A party that does not devote all of its thought and effort to the duty of furthering the health, comfort, happiness and prosperity of the community as a whole is bound in time to fail."⁴ The difference must be over the rate of speed with which we progress, not over the question of whether we shall progress.

⁴ *New York Times*, September 28, 1934.

VIII

HOW CANDIDATES ARE MADE

AN AMERICAN political campaign, particularly a Presidential campaign, is in many respects irrational and confusing, but there is about it a peculiar attraction for those who have caught the lure of the game of politics. Two opposing sides marshal their forces, and with oratory, editorializing, pamphleteering, and much general commotion engage in a battle for the verdict of the public that will place one or the other in control of the government. In Presidential campaigns, the nominations are made in early summer, but the excitement reaches its height in the autumn, and the fight rages most fiercely in October, on the eve of the election. Which side will win depends mainly upon four factors: the candidates, the issues, the tactics pursued, and the condition of the country.

James Bryce had a chapter in *The American Commonwealth* entitled "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen Presidents," in which he suggested that great leaders practically never reach the Presidency because the proportion of first-rate men in American politics is relatively rare, the American political system gives fewer opportunities for personal distinction than the parliamentary systems of Europe, and great leaders make more enemies than obscure men, and are therefore less desirable as candidates. Although it is inaccurate to say that great men are never chosen President, it is true that the number of second-rate Presidents exceeds the number of outstanding leaders who have held office. This is not a condition peculiar to the United States. Mediocre prime ministers are not a rarity in England or in France, but

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there are certain features characteristic of American politics and the process by which we choose our candidates that are not always calculated to draw the greatest men into the Presidency.

The ordinary technique for winning a Presidential nomination requires that the candidate win the support of the political organizations of his party as well as the support of a considerable body of the voters. The man who wants a nomination for any office, whether it be a minor office or the Presidency, usually seeks the backing of party organization leaders in the early stages of his candidacy. He may win a nomination against the opposition of the organization, but the chances are against this in normal times. The candidate for a Presidential nomination must secure the support of different state organizations. He will find the hostility of certain notorious machines, such as that of Tammany Hall, more profitable than their friendship, but he must have the backing of party organizations in other states if he is to be nominated. Occasionally the condition of the country is such that a party is forced to nominate its strongest man against the wishes of the bosses, as in 1884, when the Democrats nominated Grover Cleveland, and in 1916, when the popular strength of President Wilson forced Republican leaders to turn reluctantly to Charles Evan Hughes. The organization will yield to an insistent public demand for a particular candidate or type of candidate. But the man most likely to be successful is the one who cultivates both the organization and the people. This requires political skill of a high order, for the competition is usually keen and the competitors are masters of the game.

The development of widespread popular support tends to win for a candidate either the whole-hearted or reluctant backing of organization leaders. Publicity of the right kind is indispensable in any campaign for popular support. A candidate may win the people in spite of the newspapers, but more often he wins them through the newspapers. In any case, if he is run-

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ning for any important office, he will probably obtain the help of at least one publicity agent, usually a former newspaper man, who knows something of the science of attracting attention and manufacturing opinion. The job of the agent is to "sell" the candidate to the people. To that end he will probably write many of the candidate's public statements and edit the rest. He will try to see that only the favorable side of his employer is presented to the public and that unfavorable news does not go out.

The candidate must avoid arousing the antagonism of a section of the country or of any influential and numerous group of the members of his party. William G. McAdoo failed to get the Democratic nomination in 1924 because of the bitter opposition of the East. Alfred E. Smith overrode strong sectional and group opposition in 1928 to win the nomination, but was badly defeated in the election because of it. In order to win friends and avoid making enemies, the candidate will usually be tactfully vague on questions of a particularly controversial nature. A distinguished statesman once said, "Candidates are not chosen on a 'guess what I have in my hand' basis." But as a matter of fact, they are often chosen on that very basis. Strategy demands that the candidate give the appearance of strength and courage; certainly he should not seem weak and irresolute while he avoids being too specific in his promises or too definite in his program.

The candidate chosen will be one who has, or seems to have, political "availability": that is, his personality, record, reputation, and affiliations fit the needs of the time. Availability is much more effective than greatness in winning nominations. This "availability" is first recognized by the candidate or his friends. He does not sit back and wait for the people to discover him and beat a path to his door without his help. He at least hangs a lantern out to guide them in his direction; more often he goes out into the byways and hedges and compels

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them to come in. The tactics of capturing popular attention and winning public support are best illustrated in the stories of successful Presidential candidates.

About 1911, a Texas politician, Colonel E. M. House, who had been wanting for some time to play a significant part in the making of a President, discovered that Woodrow Wilson was the man who would make a candidate after his own heart. He had not met Wilson, but he had been attracted by the qualities of leadership he had displayed and the work that he had done as governor of New Jersey. He noted the fact that Wilson had had no political background before he became governor, and hence had no enemies in the field of national politics. Also, there was the favorable fact that Wilson's troubled career at Princeton had shown him to be the enemy of aristocratic special privilege. The time was ripe for the election of a Democratic President, and Wilson was the man who could be elected.

But Colonel House did not make Wilson President, and he was not the first to discover his availability. For nearly thirty years, Wilson had been writing books and essays, and he had made many speeches throughout the country. He was a forceful orator who made an impression of power upon people with whom he came in contact. As early as 1902, he had been suggested as a Presidential possibility. His election as governor of the normally Republican state of New Jersey in 1910, after a spectacular campaign, definitely advanced him toward the Presidency. Shortly after his election, he successfully defied the Democratic bosses of the state and advanced a program of legislation that ranked among the most progressive in the nation. By 1911, the call for Wilson as a Presidential candidate began to come in volume from different parts of the country.

The steps that made him his party's nominee were taken with skill, and he deserves the credit for much of the strategy himself. His problem was a difficult one, for he had to take Wil-

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liam Jennings Bryan's place of leadership in the Democratic party without accepting all of Bryan's program or alienating either Bryan's followers or the more conservative Democrats of the East. Early in 1911, in a conference between Wilson and a little group of his chief supporters, it was decided that the most important thing was to get Wilson before the people of the West. But first he sought to gain strength in the South. Already there was vigorous support for him in Texas. In March, he made his first political speech in the South, speaking at Atlanta. His reception there was more favorable than even his friends had hoped for. Further meetings with southerners increased his prestige in that region. In May he started west on a trip during which he was to make thirty-one speeches in seven states. His speeches appealed to the progressive sentiment of the West, without creating the impression that he was as unsound in his views as the conservatives had considered Bryan. This trip, one of the most extensive speaking tours ever made by a candidate for a Presidential nomination, apparently had much to do with winning the favor of the western people, although it did not win the support of all of the politicians who went to the National Convention in 1912.

In the East, Wilson's supporters set up an office in New York City, which was managed by Frank Parker Stockbridge, a journalist who was acting as publicity agent for their campaign. The movement was very modest at first. Wilson seems to have held its propaganda activities in check, against the wishes of McCombs, his volunteer manager. Whether a result of luck or political insight, the restraint of the movement seems to have contributed to its success. From campaign headquarters, Stockbridge answered requests for copies of Wilson's addresses and for photographs, and in time he sent out clipsheets made up of newspaper articles and editorials about Wilson. The requests became more numerous as time went on.

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But there was strong opposition to Wilson in the East. Originally he had been picked by Colonel George Harvey and the bosses as the best man to head off the Bryan element in the party. They considered him conservative enough to be satisfactory and progressive enough to gather wide support. However, Wilson, who had originally been quite conservative in his political outlook, grew rapidly more progressive as he gained experience with the forces actually at work in practical politics. In December, 1911, Colonel Harvey told E. M. House that "everybody south of Canal Street was in a frenzy against Governor Wilson," and that great pressure was being brought on him to oppose Wilson. The wealthy interests were reported as willing to raise any amount of money necessary to defeat Wilson.

In the meantime, Harvey's support of Wilson had become a political liability, for it made the western progressive element of the party suspect that he might be the candidate of the very interests that he had attacked and that they distrusted. One day at a meeting between Wilson and Harvey and Henry Waterson, Harvey asked Wilson if his support was being referred to as support on behalf of "the interests." Wilson replied somewhat bluntly that there was such talk and that it was having a serious effect in the western states. After this, Colonel Harvey ceased to support Wilson and gradually veered to the support of Champ Clark. The opposition of Harvey and other conservative eastern leaders turned out to be worth more to Wilson than their support would have been, for it strengthened his hold on the progressive wing of the party, and gradually brought Bryan to his support. His nomination, when it came, was a result of the support of the Bryan following.

Wilson had some strong newspaper support. The Scripps papers were for him. The Baltimore *Sun* gave him energetic support. Perhaps most important of all was the support that

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came to him from the New York *World*, the leading Democratic newspaper in the country. On May 30, 1912, the *World* said editorially of Wilson: "He has proved himself sound on tariff reform. He has proved himself sound on the Sherman law. . . . He has proved himself sound against government by Wall Street plutocracy. . . . He has proved himself sound on the fundamental principles of constitutional government He has proved himself a free man who cannot be bulldozed by bosses or influenced against his convictions even by his personal friends. That is the sort of man who ought to be president." This editorial was extensively read and quoted, and undoubtedly had widespread influence.

Wilson's nomination was a result of his own strength. His opportunity for leadership came as the culmination of a movement of democratic revolt in the United States. The people were looking for progressive leadership, but Bryan, the veteran of the cause, had made too many enemies to be most likely of success. He was mistrusted by many people who lacked respect for his judgment and who had not yet recovered from the impression made by the bitter attacks made upon him in the campaign of 1896. The way in which Wilson steered his way between Bryanism and conservatism, to emerge safely with the support of Bryan without alienating the moderate conservatives in his party, was a demonstration of political skill of a high order.

As Ray Stannard Baker points out, Wilson lacked many of the qualities ordinarily found in politicians.¹ He was not of the good "mixer" type. He did not flatter people or kiss their babies. He sometimes blundered in his appointments and showed elements of weakness in handling details of political organization. Apparently he was not much interested in patronage, and as governor turned most of it over to Joe Tumulty,

¹ *Woodrow Wilson Life and Letters*, Vol. III, 183. Doubleday, Doran & Co.

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his private secretary, and James Kerney, a newspaper editor who had supported him. But in the larger matters of strategy he showed himself a master. He might have followed the leadership of the New Jersey bosses, but he did not. He might have made harmful alliances in national politics, but he did not. He might very easily have alienated Bryan and his followers, but he steadily strengthened his hold upon them. He impressed men with his sincerity, the clarity of his intelligence, and his ability of leadership. His nomination was not due primarily to organization; his backers were mainly political amateurs. It was not due to high powered publicity, or to the expenditure of money. The nomination went to Wilson because the tide of liberalism was running strong, and he established himself as a liberal of force and power without creating the impression that he was a radical.

In 1928, the Republicans, in national convention assembled, nominated Herbert Hoover for President on the first ballot. It is difficult to realize in the post-1929 period how he could have commanded the support that made him the overwhelming choice of the Republican party and sent him to the Presidency with the general popular expectation that he would be an outstandingly successful President. In 1931, the Washington correspondent of *The Nation* wrote that President Hoover's relations with the newspapermen had "reached a stage without a parallel during the present century." After calling attention to the President's extreme sensitiveness to unfavorable publicity, the correspondent referred to him as a "humorless and resentful man."² In 1932, Frank R. Kent wrote of Hoover: "For himself, he played politics when he should not and failed to play them when he should."³ So had the mighty fallen!

Hoover's prestige in 1928 seems to have resulted from his brief

² Paul Y. Anderson, *The Nation*, Vol. CXXXIII (1931), 382.

³ "The Reconstruction of Herbert Hoover," *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. XCI, 258.

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career as an appointed official in public office, and from a well-organized publicity campaign. His work as a non-political administrator of relief during the World War had placed him before the public in a favorable light. His service in the Coolidge cabinet identified him with the good times of the Coolidge era, when there was a general tendency for men to bask in the warm sunlight of prosperity and continue moving in the same direction, when they moved at all. As Secretary of Commerce, Hoover had created the impression that he was one of the most capable men in the administration. He completely made over his department and greatly expanded its activities. He stimulated the Bureau of Standards into activity that resulted in the standardization of various products manufactured in the United States—among them, paving bricks, beds, lumber, hotel china-ware, and steel bars. Such standardization eliminated much waste in production. In the infant depression of 1921, Hoover served with credit as chairman of an Unemployment Conference called by the President. As a result of its work, an excellent report was made on the causes of depressions and how to avoid them. He started a monthly survey of business by the Bureau of the Census, which was supposed to go deep into business conditions. A little later, he served as chairman of a committee to deal with flood relief on the Mississippi, and was placed before the public as a great humanitarian engineer, a role that the public had already come to associate generally with his name.

When Hoover's receptive attitude toward a Presidential nomination in 1920 did not result in his getting one, he developed into a realistic politician. He had money to spend and he spent it. A powerful and effective publicity machine advertised him to the people as a great humanitarian with a thorough knowledge of economic facts and principles and an unusual understanding of sound principles of government. While he was

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Secretary of Commerce, a group of newspaper correspondents fell into the practice of gathering in his office several afternoons a week. Here Hoover would talk to them freely, not only about the affairs of his department, but also about the affairs of other departments and of the Presidency. He did not hesitate to criticize his colleagues. Many of the newspaper men came to believe that he knew more about governmental matters and world affairs than any other man in the administration.⁴ To Americans in general he came to be an outstandingly able business man in government who was above the petty ways of partisan politics. In the meantime, the practical work of organization was going on. For some time before the 1928 convention, a group of very realistic machine politicians were lining up votes for Hoover. The southern delegations, always most susceptible to machine control, were lined up for him before the convention met. So thorough was the organization work, so effective was the publicity campaign, that the 1928 convention in Kansas City voted overwhelmingly for Herbert Hoover as their Presidential candidate. Publicity had made him a superman in the eyes of the people; organization had won the support of the delegates.

As the gods seem to have deserted President Hoover after allowing him to ride for a season on the highway that leads to Mt. Olympus, so they seem to have smiled on his successor. Franklin D. Roosevelt first attracted widespread national attention when the Democratic party nominated him for Vice-President in 1920, but even then he did not make an impression on the public particularly different from that made by the average Vice-Presidential candidate. A little later, an attack of infantile paralysis seemed to have retired him permanently from the field of public life. But he came back, and the effectiveness and

⁴ Paul Y. Anderson, "Hoover and the Press," *The Nation*, Vol. CXXXIII (1931), 382.

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warmth with which he made nomination speeches for Al Smith in the conventions of 1924 and 1928 aroused the admiration of political leaders. When he was elected governor of New York in 1928, at the same time that the idol of the East Side lost the state, he became a logical candidate for the Presidency. When he was re-elected in 1930 by the tremendous majority of 750,000 votes, and carried the Republican up-state territory, he moved far out in front of the field of available candidates. He had demonstrated a vote-getting ability unequalled in modern politics.

The time was ripe for his appearance. Democratic leaders were anxiously looking for a candidate who would save them from the danger of another nomination of Al Smith. The South and West had never wanted Governor Smith in the first place, but the insistence of the eastern Democrats and their camp followers had finally overwhelmed the opposition and won the nomination for him in 1928. The result had been disastrous for the party. Roosevelt loomed up to the fearful and resentful satraps of Democracy, and to their straying followers, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

His assets as a candidate were many. He had demonstrated his ability to win votes. His name was Roosevelt, a name that called to mind characteristics that the people longed to see in another President. He had fought against Tammany Hall as a young New York politician. He had been associated with the administration of Woodrow Wilson. He was a wet, satisfactory to the East, but not so all-absorbingly wet as to be repulsive to the West and South. He was progressive enough to appeal to the West, without being radical enough to alienate the East. And, coming after Al Smith and the defeat of 1928 in which religion seemed to have played some part, the fact that he was a Protestant added much to his desirability as a candidate.

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Under the circumstances, successful organization work was all that was necessary to win the nomination for Roosevelt in 1932. In that field, he and his lieutenants demonstrated an ability that ranks them with the master strategists of American politics. James A. Farley, state chairman of the Democratic party in New York, led in the work of setting up the organization for the pre-convention campaign. Governor Roosevelt had for years been keeping in touch with local leaders throughout the country through correspondence and by telephone conversations. When headquarters of the Roosevelt-for-President movement were established in New York and the drive began in earnest, there was thus already a substantial foundation on which to build.

In the summer of 1931, Mr. Farley made a 30,000-mile trip to the West and Northwest to work for the cause. Ostensibly his purpose was to attend the Elks national convention at Seattle. On his return trip, while in dry territory, he issued a statement at Omaha, Nebraska, saying:

Economic issues will overshadow the prohibition question. . . . I have no doubt the farmers are more interested in the price of wheat, hogs, corn, and other products than they are in any other subject just now. They have discovered the Republican promises of higher prices and prosperity are mythical.⁵

The news dispatch that reported this statement from the depression-sick farm belt concluded with statements that showed how the genial campaigner was using his time. It said, "Mr. Farley spent the day yesterday in Colorado with Arthur F. Mullen of Omaha, national committeeman for Nebraska. He went to Lincoln today for a conference with Governor Charles Bryan. Tomorrow the New Yorker will visit Kansas."

Mr. Farley's missionary tour took him into nineteen states of the Middle West and Far West. On his return, he issued a

⁵ *New York Times*, July 15, 1931.

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statement in which he said: "I was very successful in meeting the State chairmen in all but two States, where circumstances made it impossible, and I found a very cordial feeling toward New York State on their part. In many cases the State chairmen honored me with luncheons and other gatherings, which resulted in my being able to meet prominent Democratic men and women of each State."⁶ For months before he began his trip, Mr. Farley had been writing hundreds of letters a day to the people in those states. On the trip, at luncheons and other gatherings, he met many of the people to whom he had been writing, and then, as he says, he "just gave them a plain heart-to-heart talk, the kind everybody understands—no highfalutin stuff, but just man to man—telling them why I thought Roosevelt was the best man to nominate, and why he had the best chance to win."⁷

Democrats were impressed with the idea that Roosevelt was in the lead, that he was likely to win the nomination, and that he was the best man to beat Hoover if he did win the nomination. The illusion of victory psychology was fostered by statements from Democratic leaders, by polls conducted among various groups to demonstrate Roosevelt's leadership in popularity, and by publicity given to him and to his cause. At the national convention of the Elks, Mr. Farley said, "The name of Roosevelt is magic. . . . I have heard it in Minnesota, in Indiana, and in Ohio. There is no organization behind him yet, and still sentiment seems to be crystallizing for him all over the country."⁸ On December 6, 1931, he issued a statement in Washington, D. C., which predicted that Roosevelt would be nominated on the first ballot. Such statements, and other indications of Roosevelt's lead in the pre-convention campaign,

⁶ *New York Times*, July 19, 1931, Section I, 5.

⁷ Quoted in R. V. Peel and T. C. Donnelly, *The 1932 Campaign*, 69. Copyright 1935. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.

⁸ *New York Times*, July 7, 1931.

were given wide publicity. They made considerable impression on the public, particularly on the politicians, who make it their business to watch for the direction of political winds.

All the while, under Mr. Farley's direction, the campaign headquarters was sending out thousands of pieces of literature, and he was himself keeping in touch with political leaders throughout the United States by a voluminous correspondence supplemented by numerous telephone conversations. Local supporters of Governor Roosevelt were made to feel responsible for the campaign in their part of the country. Winning delegations was their job. But national headquarters, and particularly Mr. Farley, gave them information and encouragement, and overlooked nothing.

Roosevelt's nomination in 1932 was largely a result of the splendid work of organization done under the leadership of Chairman Farley. The support gathered came more easily because of the characteristics that gave Roosevelt a high degree of political availability. A man who could carry New York State as he had done, started off with a tremendous advantage. Then, he and his lieutenants showed good judgment in their avoidance of anything that would alienate the West or South. Roosevelt's progressive record had particular appeal for the West; and that section, as we have seen, was particularly cultivated. The irritating issue of prohibition was not allowed to come too much to the fore. When John J. Raskob attempted in 1931 to get the National Committee of the party to declare against the eighteenth amendment, Roosevelt leaders worked with the southerners to head him off. The Roosevelt forces were wise enough to see the wisdom of stressing economic issues in a period when the depression had aroused widespread dissatisfaction and a demand for a progressive candidate. The result of the happy combination of availability, generalship, and the condition of the times was that Roosevelt's support was na-

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tional rather than sectional. He went to the convention far ahead of his rivals for the nomination.

In 1936, the Republican party, still somewhat dazed by the overwhelming defeat of 1932 and the unprecedented loss of Congressional seats in 1934, pinned its hopes of a return to power on Alfred M. Landon, governor of Kansas. To many of those who were weary of the New Deal, Governor Landon had come to stand for orthodoxy and sanity and a return to the halcyon days of Calvin Coolidge: yet four years before this nobody outside the state of Kansas had ever heard of him. Said a news dispatch in *The New York Times*, when he was nominated:

Nature and art were combined in bringing Governor Landon before the national public with a skill which was never shown by the Old Guard. To build up William McKinley to the status of 1896 (Mark Hanna's feat) was not a comparable performance. Mr. McKinley had been long in national politics, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and Governor of Ohio by convention time.

But when John D. M. Hamilton, the Kansas National Committeeman, and Roy C. Roberts, managing editor of the *Kansas City Star*, decided that Mr. Landon had the proper equipment to contend for the nomination of 1936, he was literally unknown outside his small Plains State.⁹

Certain general lines of the strategy that the Republicans must pursue if they were to regain power were obvious from the moment of their defeat in 1932. They must bring about an alliance between the eastern seaboard states and a section of the farm belt in the West and Middle West. They must pick a man who would stand for economy and sound finance without being reactionary enough to alienate the farm belt. Governor Landon seemed to be a candidate made to order for their requirements. He first appeared as a Presidential possibility when he emerged as one of the few Republican candidates for

⁹ June 12, 1936.

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governor or senator to survive the Democratic landslide of 1932. His Kansas location gave him geographic availability. His work as governor increased his prestige in a period when government borrowing had increased to such proportions that it was arousing the alarm of conservative people. The state government of Kansas had been required to live on a cash basis by a constitutional provision dating from the last century; hence, the governor was bound to balance his budget whether he wanted to or not. But Governor Landon went further than that. He successfully led a fight to require by statute that the political subdivisions of the state live on a cash basis. His predecessor had advocated a constitutional amendment containing such a requirement, but had been unable to get the amendment passed.

Early in the Landon administration, a little group of Kansas editors and politicians, and the managing editor of *The Kansas City Star*, in the neighboring Missouri city, decided that he would make a good candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1936. They set to work with singleness of purpose and energetic zeal to win the nomination. Publicity flowed out of Kansas in a steady stream, and *The Kansas City Star* helped the cause along almost every day. A news item in the *Star* of August 25, 1935, is typical. It began as follows:

HOW KANSAS CUT COSTS

A Reduction of 33 Million Dollars Since 1929

Topeka, Aug. 24—The cost of government in Kansas has dropped 33 million dollars since the peak of 1929. There is an increase of 2½ million dollars noted in the fiscal year which ended June 30 over the preceding year, due to the increased demands for relief and increased gasoline tax collections.

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In the campaign of 1932 Governor Landon promised he would do everything in his power to cut taxes and one specific promise was to cut the motor car license rate in two. He chopped 2 million dollars off the highway funds in a bill and thus reduced the demands of government, even though it was specifically for highway improvements, a little more than 2 million dollars. He permitted no higher levies than before. At the same legislative session the governor submitted the improvements to the budget law; the cash basis law and tax limitation laws and in the 1935 session secured the enactment of the uniform accounting and auditing law, all of which are intended and expected to help reduce the costs of government.

He was presented to the country as the incarnation of the budget balancer, a man of sound common sense and business ability. Under his leadership, Kansas had received more than \$200,000,000 of New Deal money, and he had himself once made a successful trip to Washington to get money for drought relief, but these facts were not emphasized. His belief in efficiency, economy, and thrift, and his practical ability, were headlined.

* Such publicity attracted the attention of numerous Republicans who were casting about in search of a candidate who could be set against President Roosevelt most effectively. William Randolph Hearst was among those soon attracted, and the Hearst press helped to spread propaganda. Ogden Mills, Eugene Meyer, and others came from the East and returned with good words for the Kansas budget balancer.

For some time, Governor Landon had the field almost to himself because of the defeatist spirit that had engulfed the Republicans after the debacles of 1932 and 1934. The chief sources of possible danger to his candidacy were the Old Guard, ex-President Hoover, and Senator Borah. When eastern industrial and financial leaders were convinced that Governor Landon was sound, the sentiment for him became so strong that the Old Guard was brushed aside and eastern delegations favorable to

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him were chosen. After waiting until the Landon movement had grown too strong to stop, Senator Borah made a campaign for delegates favorable to himself. Mr. Hoover did not openly oppose Governor Landon, but sought, and obtained, control over the delegation from California, against the opposition of William Randolph Hearst. The Landon policy was to remain friendly with everybody, but in the struggle for control of the California delegation, failure to repudiate Mr. Hearst aroused Hoover's resentment.

The policy of the Landon strategists was to avoid making enemies within the party. Governor Landon avoided controversial issues, condemned paternalism, bureaucracy, and centralization, and labeled himself a "constitutional liberal." He did not invade other states in a campaign for delegates, nor did he make any open bid for votes. It seemed that the nomination was seeking him out in Kansas. Emollient deference was shown to Mr. Hoover by various gestures, the climax of which was the speech that he was allowed to make at the Landon-controlled convention and the very cordial reception given him there. At the convention, Senator Borah was anxiously wooed by Landon supporters, who allowed him to write planks on his pet subjects for the platform, at the risk of displeasing the conservatives. The efficacy of the tactics used by the Landon strategists was demonstrated when their candidate was nominated on the first ballot, and the convention was safely carried through without any show of opposition to him.

The success of the campaign to win the nomination for Governor Landon was, as *The New York Times* aptly said, "a combination of geography and politics." At a time when government spending had reached a volume alarming to many solid citizens, a safe and sane business man governor of a middle western state appeared on the horizon, where hardly any Republicans remained. He was not tarred with the tar of the Old

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Guard. He had no enemies in national politics. He was just a good substantial successful business man in politics in a progressive state. With the use of the correct political strategy, it seemed that his geographical location should catch the western votes and his financial soundness the eastern votes. In the beginning, he was not nationally known, but fortunately a very able board of strategy took over the matter of bringing his characteristics and qualifications to the public view. He was built to national size in a very short time by the best publicity methods. His nomination was a triumph of political technique, in which the chief element was organized propaganda.

Even a casual study of the way in which men are made presidential nominees reveals ample evidence that important factors other than fitness for the job play a determining part in the process. The party is interested primarily in nominating a man who will make a good candidate rather than one who will make a good President. Appropriate geographical location seems to be an essential. All three of the successful Democratic candidates for the Presidency since the Civil War have come from the East. Conservative mistrust of western radicalism is probably the explanation for this fact. All of the successful Republican candidates since 1860 have come from the Middle West or Far West, except Theodore Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge, and they first became President by succeeding from the Vice-Presidency. In that period, no resident of the South has been elected President, the Democrats feeling that it is safe territory and the Republicans considering it hopeless. The previous career of the man who would be President is also an important consideration. Outstanding senators are never nominated. They have had to take their stand on controversial issues in national politics and have made too many enemies. The office of governor of a doubtful or otherwise important state is the best stepping stone. In such a position, a man can demonstrate his executive

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ability and cement his hold on his state without making enemies in the field of national politics. But no matter how good a man's record in public office, or in any other capacity, he will not have a chance to win the nomination of his party unless he is given effective publicity and support is organized for him. Finally, he must fit the times. Depression will result in the election of a Franklin Roosevelt. Reaction to seemingly excessive governmental expenditures led to the nomination of a Landon. The liberal tide in 1912 led to the nomination of Woodrow Wilson. Unrest in 1896 gave the nomination to William Jennings Bryan. Had the scene been changed only a little in any instance, the nominees might have been entirely different.

The whole procedure appears irrational and undemocratic. We choose a man from Ohio rather than Virginia because Ohio is a doubtful state and Virginia is not. A man from Montana, however able, has practically no chance against a man from New York. Control of the organization in a few strategic states or the support of a few key men are often the deciding factors. Publicity agents bombard us with propaganda designed to make us believe that their employer is a superman or just a good ordinary honest solid citizen, as the times may demand. If he has been only a short time in public life, so much the better, for the publicity agents can then fashion him with freedom into almost any style of model that seems likely to carry the most appeal.

Some political thinkers have come to the conclusion that we should scrap our whole method of choosing a President and adopt either a parliamentary form of government or a government of new design. Whether another form of procedure would result in the selection of better leaders is a questionable matter. Certainly open mindedness on the subject and readiness to accept any change for the better are conducive to prog-

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ress. Good machinery is no guarantee of good government but does increase the likelihood of good government, and in time of stress, when the strain on the democratic system is great, it might mean the difference between success and failure. Most important of all is the maintenance of an intelligent and alert electorate. If the people can separate the true from the false in the propaganda that plays upon them, if they can make an intelligent choice when they know the truth, if they will demand a high quality in party nominees and punish the party that relaxes its standards—then even imperfect machinery can be made to work with a high degree of success.

IX

PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS

ONE of the English poets tells of an old man who, when he was handed a human skull that had been found in his field, was reminded of a battle fought there years before.

"But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory."

Sometimes political campaigns seem like that. There is much shouting and "viewing with alarm" of the portentous evils that lie ahead if the opposition wins, but when the triumphant party emerges with "a famous victory," hardly anything has been decided except that one man shall be President instead of another. In some cases, that is a matter of little consequence. Does anyone imagine that the fate of the United States would have been materially altered if Governor Cox had been elected President in 1920 instead of Warren G. Harding, or if John W. Davis had defeated Coolidge in 1924? Many times the issues are less sharply differentiated than the personalities of the candidates. Hardly a man is now alive who can tell what were the issues in the campaigns of 1900, 1904, 1908, 1924, and 1928. When real issues are involved, they may be camouflaged with the pageantry of politics or the technique of vote-acquisitive evasion. One historian tells us that "the principal argument in the presidential campaign of 1828 was the planting of a hickory pole with a hurrah for Andrew Jackson." And yet momentous issues hung on the results of that election. The victory of Jack-

son was to mark the triumph of the second democratic revolution in the United States.

The real issues of a campaign are often not easily discernible at the outset. In any campaign, issues and personalities and tactics are likely to be mixed together almost inextricably. Each party naturally tries to put forward as many good vote-attractive issues as possible, picturing itself as the champion of the people's welfare. Each party tries to force certain issues upon the opposition, which the opposition may refuse to accept. As James Bryce suggested, each attacks, not the real enemy, "but a stuffed figure" that it sets up to represent the enemy.

Supposedly, the party platforms first formally define the issues of the campaign; actually, they may confuse them instead. For the object of the platform is to appeal to as many voters as possible and to alienate only the minimum number. Politicians have long known that platforms are made to get in on and not to stand on. An analysis of the party platforms of 1928 revealed that 44.75 per cent of the Republican platform was devoted to praise of the Republican party. The percentage of the Democratic platform devoted either to criticism of the Republicans or praise of the Democratic party was 28.6. Sixty-three per cent of the Republican discussion of policies was presented in vague and ambiguous terms. Sixty-eight per cent of the Democratic statement of policies was vague and ambiguous.¹ Such treatment is typical of platforms, despite the fact that the party is supposed to select issues and present them to the people. The voter must always consider the candidate and the record of his party along with the platform, and usually they are of much more importance than it is.

A campaign does not afford much opportunity for rational discussion of real issues. It is filled with the manipulations of political strategists whose aim is to use issues as a tool with

¹ Devere Allen, "A Survey of the Parties," published by *The World Tomorrow*.

which to win the election. Emotions are more easily reached than reason and much more likely to bring unity; hence, they are never neglected in a drive for votes. Some reasonable arguments must be advanced, but they will be appropriately seasoned with words and phrases designed to arouse emotional response. Under such circumstances, the voter may have a difficult time separating real from fictitious issues. However, periodic exposure to the winds that blow upon him in our democratic system develops a certain amount of sophistication that hardens him to deception and enables him to make fairly reasonable decisions.

Among the stratagems of any campaign, vilification of the opposition occupies an important place. The policies of opponents are invariably "viewed with alarm," and when opportunity offers, the cry becomes "turn the rascals out!" The *New York Tribune* was using this strategy in 1896 when it referred to the Democratic convention of that year as, "The new rag, tag and bobtail democracy of Altgeld and Tillman. . . ." The mention of Altgeld and Tillman to conservative Americans in those days was like waving a red flag in front of an angry bull. As for the Democratic candidate, said the *Tribune*, "Crude, raw, inexperienced, demagogic, a facile platform orator and plausible master of campaign sophistries, the candidate put in nomination to-day is indeed a typical representative of the ideals and tendencies of the modernized and Western Democracy."² This description of the Democratic party and William Jennings Bryan was mild in comparison with what was said when the Republicans warmed to the fight. The *New York Journal*, supporting Bryan, was led to comment, "The representatives of half of the American people have been denounced in delirious language as anarchists, cutthroats, and swindlers. This crusade has been one of reckless misrepresentation from the start." It

² July 11, 1896.

concluded, Bryan "follows the truth as he sees it, though it lead him to political destruction. His spirit is . . . that of a prophet. On the other hand we have William McKinley, bound hand, foot, and tongue to the most corrupt combination that ever exhibited itself openly in an American presidential campaign. . . . Nobody who realizes what is at stake in this campaign can vote to abandon government of the people, by the people, for the people, in favor of government of McKinley, by Hanna, for a syndicate."³

In 1928, the Democrats made good use of their opportunity to paint the opposition black. Their platform said:

Unblushingly the Republican Party offers as its record agriculture prostrate, industry depressed, American shipping destroyed, workmen without employment, everywhere disgust and suspicion, and corruption unpunished and unafraid.

Never in the entire history of the country has there occurred in any given period of time or, indeed, in all time put together, such a spectacle of sordid corruption and unabashed rascality as that which has characterized the administration of federal affairs under eight blighting years of Republican rule. Not the revels of reconstruction, nor all compounded frauds succeeding that evil era, have approached in sheer audacity the shocking thieveries and startling depravities of officials high and low in the public service at Washington.

Although the opposition party has an advantage in the use of invective, as it takes the offensive, the Republicans did not fail to use the technique of vilification against their enemies. They declared that the Teapot Dome oil issue was dead, and countercharged with the cry of "Tammany" against the Democrats. Outside New York this was at least as effective in frightening the voters as the corruption charge that had been brought against the Republicans. Then there was always the time-worn contention that the Democrats could not be trusted with the

³ July 13, 1896.

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government. The *New York Herald Tribune* declared that "the voters want no ventures into socialism, no establishment of state paternalism at the expense of private initiative. They want no all-absorbing government, dragooning the masses and extinguishing the nation's vital spark."

The depression that enveloped the country during the Hoover administration furnished the Democrats with excellent material for attacks on the President in the campaign of 1932 and the period leading up to it. Shortly after the campaign of 1928, the Democrats had engaged Mr. Charles Michelson, a very able journalist, to act as their full time publicity agent and missionary to the public mind. Under Mr. Michelson's able direction, every mistake that President Hoover made was mercilessly pointed out. For three years he hammered Hoover, and as Frank Kent said, "he did one of the finest pieces of hammering ever seen." In the minds of the people, the harassed President became a kind of satanic personification of the forces that were responsible for the depression. Cruel stories about him were told throughout the country. A typical one was that President Hoover had once asked Secretary Mellon to lend him a nickel to buy a soda for a friend, and had met with the generous response "Here's a dime—treat 'em all." The Republicans tried to meet this campaign of vilification by the use of publicity designed to picture Hoover as another Lincoln who had brought the country safely through a desperate period, but their publicity agents lacked the skill to counteract successfully the Democratic propaganda and the popular tendency to blame the man who was "in" during the period of hard times.

The Republicans charged that the Democrats were slandering Hoover as the enemies of Washington and Lincoln had slandered them, and took the offensive with charges against Roosevelt. Toward the close of the campaign, President Hoover made a bitter attack upon his rival. In a speech at

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Indianapolis, he referred to "the self-interested inexactitude which he [Roosevelt] is broadcasting to the American people." Then he accused Mr. Roosevelt of ignorance, misrepresentation, and inconsistency. Democratic criticism of the tariff was "nonsense," and Democratic speeches on the subject were "diatribes." The general drift of his speech was that Roosevelt was an unscrupulous sort of person, unfit to be trusted with the Presidency.⁴

In 1936, the Republicans were out, and hence in the position of the aggressor. Their strategy was to attack the New Deal as an evil and alien thing that had been grafted upon American institutions, and the Democratic leaders, particularly the President, as unfit to govern. To this end their platform declared:

For three long years the New Deal administration has dishonored American traditions and flagrantly betrayed the pledges upon which the Democratic party sought and received public support.

The powers of Congress have been usurped by the President.

The integrity and authority of the Supreme Court have been flaunted.

The rights and liberties of American citizens have been violated.

It has bred fear and hesitation in commerce and industry, thus discouraging new enterprises, preventing employment and prolonging the depression.

President Roosevelt was accused by Republican orators of being responsible for the establishment of an un-American system, of conscienceless extravagance, of demagoguery, and of a consistent disregard of his promises. Chairman Hamilton said, "And even if he promises to return to the American way, the doubt will remain in view of his long string of broken promises." At about the same time that Mr. Hamilton was making this assertion, the Republican committee issued a statement, in the course of which they said of the President, "It may be that

⁴ *New York Times*, October 29, 1932.

he is sincere in the golden words of opportunity spoken to business here last night. But why are his words so different from his deeds?"⁵

The Democratic strategy in the campaign was to create the impression that Roosevelt was much abler than Landon; hence, their counter-vilification was of a more insidious sort than usual. It consisted of propaganda designed to belittle Landon, and not of vigorous assaults on him. Since Mr. Hoover had become a symbol of evil, the Democrats sometimes brought his name into the campaign and abused him. The Liberty League and the "princes of privilege" were pictured as enemies of the people who were behind the attempt to defeat the New Deal. But the party on the offensive made most use of the strategy of condemnation, as is usually the case.

Often closely associated with the technique of vilification of the opposition is the appeal to fear, which plays an important part in the strategy of most political campaigns. The Republicans especially have made use of this appeal, because they have been the conservative party since the Civil War and, except in the South, have numbered among their members a large proportion of the "solid citizens." In 1896, the appeal to fear was used with great effect. The country as a whole was constantly bombarded with statements that a Bryan victory would mean a breakdown of American institutions and the moral and economic ruin of the nation. Toward the close of the campaign, the *New York Tribune* declared, "The country is in greater danger than it has been since 1861. . . . It was the capture of the Democratic party at Chicago by the Anarchists, Populists, Communists, and Revolutionists, which made this danger imminent."⁶ In some instances, employers told their employees that if Bryan won they would have to close their plants. This,

⁵ *New York Times*, October 16, 1936.

⁶ October 30, 1896.

and other forms of pressure that threatened the security of the workers, was designed to save for McKinley at least a part of the labor vote. The appeal to fear was particularly effective in 1896, because Bryan represented the progressive and dissatisfied element of his party and because he really favored progressive legislation.

In 1928, when the crash of 1929 was just around the corner, the Republicans distributed campaign cards containing such statements as these: "Hard times always come when Democrats try to run the nation. Ask Dad,—He Knows! Take no chances. Vote a Straight Republican Ticket!!" "*Is Your Bread Buttered?* Remember hard times when we had a Democratic President! You Can't Eat Promises! Play Safe! Vote a Straight Republican Ticket!!" ⁷

In 1932, the fear appeal was used again. Government employees were made to feel that they would lose their jobs if the Democrats won the election. Shortly before the Republican convention met, the second assistant postmaster-general made a speech to the Missouri postmasters, in the course of which he said, "Get out on the firing line in support of President Hoover. I'll be back in Washington Monday and I'll be glad at that time to take the resignation of any of you postmasters who don't want to do it. . . . When you hear anybody assailing that man Hoover, remember what I said or go read a book and answer them. As long as you do that you are filling the job of postmaster." ⁸ Employees in private industry were also told that their jobs would be endangered by a Democratic victory. President Hoover climaxed the appeal to fear with an assertion, very much in 1896 style, that the fundamental principles of the American system would be imperilled by a victory for the oppo-

⁷ From R. V. Peel and T. C. Donnelly, *The 1928 Campaign*, 86. Copyright 1931. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.

⁸ *New York Times*, May 15, 1932.

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sition. In New York City, on the eve of the election, he declared that "the proposals of our opponents represent a profound change in American life—less in concrete proposal, bad as that may be, than by implication and evasion. Dominantly in their spirit they represent a radical departure from the foundations of 150 years which have made this the greatest nation in the world. This election is not a mere shift from the ins to the outs. It means determining the course our nation will take over a century to come."⁹ A few days before, at Indianapolis, he had warned, "There are many things revealed by the campaign of our opponents which should give American citizens concern about the future."¹⁰ These various appeals to fear in 1932 were not so successful as they had been in 1896, for a variety of reasons, probably the chief of which was that the great depression, which had come during a Republican administration, made them seem hollow and a trifle ridiculous.

By 1936, the country had been under a "New Deal" administration for some three years and the "profound change" that President Hoover had warned against seemed to have become a reality, and to many citizens it was a very disturbing change. They longed for the Coolidge era, which appeared in memory to have been chiefly characterized by green pastures and still waters. But worst of all, it seemed to them, the end was not yet. The New Deal was leading the country further and further away from the paths of orthodoxy. Accordingly, the Republicans decided to make fear a central appeal of their campaign. The theme was set in the opening paragraph of the platform:

America is in peril. The welfare of American men and women and the future of our youth are at stake. We dedicate ourselves to the preservation of their political liberty, their individual opportunity and their character as free citizens, which today for the first time are threatened by government itself.

⁹ *New York Times*, November 1, 1932.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, October 29, 1932.

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During the campaign, appeal was frequently made to the popular fear of communism. Republican campaigners pictured New Deal Democracy as communism under only a thin disguise. Mr. David Dubinsky, a labor leader of New York, was cited as a communist leader who was supporting President Roosevelt, the closeness of his affiliation with the Democrats being demonstrated by the appearance of his name on the Democratic list of electors in New York. As a matter of fact, Mr. Dubinsky had fought the communistic elements in his union for years, and the employers in the industry made a statement to that effect, but the Republicans went on using him as a horrible example anyway. His name sounded as though he ought to be a communist, and a great many people would think of him as one, no matter who denied the fact.

In the middle of October the Republican National Committee issued a statement saying that Roosevelt was the Kerensky of the American revolution, that he did not know his program would lead directly to the destruction of the capitalistic system,

But Browder, the Communist candidate for President, knows it. . . . Rexford G. Tugwell knows it. . . . Felix Frankfurter knows it and is keeping mighty quiet for the president. Mordecai Ezekiel knows it, and you haven't heard his name for months.

Stalin over in Russia knows it and has ordered his following in the United States to back Roosevelt.¹¹

In the last days of the campaign, an attempt was made to frighten the workers by a concentrated drive on the Social Security Act. Posters and bulletins were displayed in factories, slips were inserted in pay envelopes, and advertisements designed to cast doubt on the benefit the workers would receive from the Act were placed in newspapers. In some cases, the suggestion was made that the government would not keep its promises or that Congress would misappropriate the money paid in by the workers. Some of the propaganda material declared

¹¹ *New York Times*, October 16, 1936.

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that individuals were to be "regimented" through the use of "identification disks." The government was said to have intentions of prying into such personal matters of the workers as their church affiliations, labor union connections, property holdings, and physical defects. Actually, the Social Security Act had been passed mainly because of the desires of American labor and it had been supported by the leaders of both parties. But the campaign appeal was designed to make it appear a monstrous imposition on the workers that had been foisted upon them by the New Deal. When this propaganda appeared at the last minute, the Democrats made a hasty counter-attack and accused the Republicans of misrepresentation. Because of their use of the radio and because of the support of organized labor, the Social Security attack seems to have been unsuccessful.

On the day before the election, *The New York Times*, commenting on the bogies presented by the Republican party, said, Credulity has diminished to a certain extent since the seventeenth century; and the public appreciates Mr. Hamilton's Deviltries because it

Has the mostest fun
A-list'n' to the witch tales 'at
Johnnie tells about
An' the gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

In any campaign, the candidate and his supporters must be careful not to alienate important groups of voters. The tactless reference of a New York clergyman in 1884 to the Democratic party as the party of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" is a classic example of what politicians must avoid. That remark is supposed to have lost the election for Republican candidate

Blaine, because it alienated enough Catholic voters in New York to throw the state to Cleveland. There are many groups that must be considered—notably, the farmers, organized labor, the Irish, the Negroes, the Germans, the Catholics, the Jews, the Protestants, the Wets, the Drys, the Veterans, and enough others to make a careful politician lie awake nights trying to avoid alienating any of them. The late Calvin Coolidge is said to have told Senator Morrow, when the latter was a candidate, that he should base his campaign on “patriotism,” because “everybody’s for it.” All too often, such a policy is followed, for one can talk long and often on such subjects as patriotism, and the sacredness of the home, and the glory of motherhood, without alienating any substantial group. But the candidate must do more than pursue the merely negative policy of not making enemies, he must win groups. In 1932, Frank R. Kent wrote that Roosevelt had made a “smart campaign” because he had not only blocked the Republican plan to make him appear radical, but he had avoided antagonizing any organized minority while expressing concern for every class and promising to better every condition.¹²

In the 1936 campaign, the strategy of appeal to groups was well illustrated, particularly in the attempts to win the farm vote, the Negro vote, the business vote, and the labor vote.

The candidates of both the major parties went to considerable lengths to win the vote of the agricultural West and Middle West. One reason for Governor Landon’s nomination had been the fact that he came from the heart of the Farm Belt. The farmers in this region were originally predominantly Republican, but for years many of them had been restive in the party. In 1932, their discontent had led them to vote heavily for Roosevelt. President Roosevelt then appointed one of their

¹² “The Next President,” *Scribners Magazine*, Vol. XCII, 260.

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respected leaders secretary of agriculture, and the administration proceeded to make good on its political promises to them. The Agricultural Adjustment Act, drought relief, conservation measures, and other acts raised the price of farm products and tended to put agriculture on a more stable and profitable basis. In mid-October of 1936, when there was some doubt as to whether the farmers would desert the Democrats because of Governor Landon's promises of a cash subsidy to them, newspaperman Jay Franklin wrote in one of his syndicated articles that conservative Republicans knew that he would not have to keep such a promise if he were elected. If the farmers committed "the unforgivable political sin of 'ingratitude'" by deserting the Democrats, who had kept their promises, he reasoned, "neither this nor any other promise made to the farmers by either major party need be kept, where fulfillment proves difficult, inconvenient or unduly expensive." The Republicans made use of appeals by several influential farm leaders, notably ex-Governor Frank Lowden of Illinois. Republican propagandists tried to frighten the farmers, who are a thrifty class, by calling attention to the great increase in government expenditures and in the national debt. The "un-Americanism" and "communism" of the New Deal was also stressed. The Democrats, on the other hand, sought to create the impression that Roosevelt was going to win and that the farmers need expect few favors in the future if they deserted him. The farmers were also deluged with other propaganda of various sorts. Radio programs featuring Secretary of Agriculture Wallace and other leaders, printed matter, and work by leaders of farm organizations were all used with effect.

The Roosevelt victory in all of the agricultural states would seem to indicate that Democratic strategy was successful. In this connection, it should not be forgotten that most of the out-

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standing political leaders of the Farm Belt either supported Roosevelt or were at least luke-warm to Governor Landon. Senator Borah, the lion of Idaho, remained in his own state and devoted himself to getting re-elected. He did not support either Landon or Roosevelt. Even Republican Senate leader McNary, of Oregon, kept very quiet about the Presidential election. The progressive leaders, such as Senator Norris and Senator La Follette, actively supported Roosevelt. In the case of Senators Borah and McNary, fear that the New Deal had won their constituents evidently kept them silent, whereas in the case of Norris and La Follette, the Democrats won the Senators, and evidently that helped to win their constituents, with whom they had great influence.

The Negro vote, only a few years ago regarded as solidly Republican, was more ardently wooed by both parties in the 1936 campaign than ever before. This vote was looked upon as an important independent bloc so distributed that it might prove to be the decisive factor in such states as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, Michigan, Maryland, and Kentucky. In Indiana, for instance, the Negro vote was estimated at 80,000. Indiana had gone for Hughes in 1916 by approximately 6,000 votes, for Hoover in 1928 by 275,000, for Roosevelt in 1932 by 184,000, and had elected a Democratic senator in 1934 by 58,000 votes. Conceivably, a swing of the major portion of the Negro vote of 80,000 might mean victory or defeat for either party. Pennsylvania's electoral vote in 1932 had been cast for President Hoover. His plurality of the popular vote amounted to 157,600 votes. A shift of 79,000 ballots would have put the state in the Democratic column. In 1936, the registered Negro voters in Pennsylvania were reported to number 230,000. Similar situations existed in other states. Small wonder then that both parties considered

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such a bloc of votes well worth going after; the Negroes had demonstrated by a considerable swing to Roosevelt in 1932 that they were a fair prize for either party.

Both parties set up elaborate campaign headquarters with sectional divisions and state bureaus designed to capture Negro support. One newspaper correspondent reported that in some states the Democratic Negroes seemed to be better organized, down to precinct workers, than the whites, and very enthusiastic in their campaign work. Both parties employed more than the usual number of Negro workers to win the votes of their fellows. The Republicans got Jesse Owens to campaign for Landon. The president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People came out for Roosevelt. Polls of Negro voters were taken, and showed a considerable trend toward Roosevelt.

Both Presidential candidates made gestures toward the Negroes. On October 11, the Republican campaign headquarters made public a letter from Governor Landon in which he said:

When the Negro maintains his allegiance to the principles of the Republican party, he is in the house of his friends. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments are Republican amendments. They made the word citizen a real word in the lives of the colored people and brought them under the protecting shelter of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

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The progress of the Negro not only in the trades but in the arts, the sciences and the professions is a truly remarkable record, proving the faith of Abraham Lincoln and demonstrating the wisdom of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, which recited that citizenship including the right to vote is the heritage of all men and women without regard to race or creed or color.

A part of the task ahead of us is the fight against lawlessness in the necessity to meet the evil of lynching, which is a blot on our American civilization. Some legal means must be devised which

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will be effective in ending this great menace to our institutions.¹³

This statement is an interesting illustration of political technique. The emphasis on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments and the mention of Abraham Lincoln were designed to arouse the emotions of the Negroes and make them vote, as they had traditionally voted, for the Republican party, because it was the party of Abraham Lincoln, the man who had set them free. The condemnation of lynching was designed to appeal further to them, but it was couched in such vague terms that the candidate did not commit himself to support national anti-lynching legislation, and the states' rights defenders could not take offense. Almost any statesman from Mississippi, Alabama, or Georgia could have made the same statement on the lynching evil.

On October 26, President Roosevelt participated in the dedication of a new chemistry building at Howard University, a government-supported university for Negroes. In the course of his speech, which was officially styled "non political," the President called attention to the fact that the government had provided three new buildings for the university and that there were "more to come." And he said, "So far as it was humanly possible the government has followed the policy that among American citizens there should be no forgotten men and no forgotten races." Secretary of the Interior Ickes, who also spoke at the dedication exercises, declared that the Public Works Administration had not only made grants to Howard University but had also "sought to increase the educational equipment available to Negroes in all sections of the nation from elementary schools to colleges."¹⁴

While the campaign generals were making such appeals, the sergeants and corporals were busily at work on individual

¹³ *New York Times*, October 11, 1936.

¹⁴ *New York Times*, October 27, 1936.

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Negroes in the city wards and other local districts. The Democratic appeal was based on the record of the administration. It was said that members of the race had been given more than usual recognition in political appointments and otherwise. Home and work relief had been provided for the unemployed. Housing projects and other welfare services had been developed. Word was passed around that continuance of relief depended upon the President's re-election. Mass meetings were held in most of the large cities of northern and border states, at which Roosevelt was hailed as the "new Lincoln." The Democrats had discovered that they too could use the magic name of the great Emancipator. Republican tactics seem to have followed the fundamental lines of past campaigns, except that the Republicans worked with unusual energy because this time they were not making a gesture at holding the votes but a strenuous effort to win them back. Their platform favored "equal opportunity for our colored citizens" and pledged "protection of their economic status and personal safety." Workers tried to reawaken the traditional feeling that the Republican party was the party with the Negro's interest at heart, and create the impression that the Democratic organization was dominated by southerners who wanted to keep him in an inferior position.

By the latter part of October, it was evident that the Democratic campaign for Negro votes had proved more successful than that of their opponents. Several factors contributed to the explanation for the radical shift of this important group vote in which the political allegiance of seventy years was finally broken down. The loosening of the Civil War traditions was indicated by the remark of a Negro headwaiter in a West Virginia hotel, "They needn't try to tell me any different. I know Mr. Lincoln ain't running this year."¹⁵ In addition to the dissolution of ancient prejudices, which such a statement symbolized, there

¹⁵ *New York Times*, October 26, 1936.

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was a deep sense of gratitude among Negroes for the benefits of the New Deal and for the recognition given them in government appointments. One campaign banner strung across a street in a Negro ward of Indianapolis carried the inscription, "Mr. Roosevelt, Our Saviour." Negroes also resented the way in which a photograph of Mrs. Roosevelt escorted by students at Howard University was used as anti-Roosevelt propaganda in the South. One factor in holding the colored people in the Republican ranks in the past had been a fear that Democratic victory would mean southern domination and discrimination against them. The actions of the Roosevelt administration dispelled that fear. On the other hand, the Republicans seem to have made the basic mistake of taking the support of the Negroes for granted during the years, without making any real effort to understand them, until in 1936 it was too late to save their votes. Mr. Walter White, the secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has said, "I venture to predict that the Negro vote as such will never belong in future to any one political party."¹⁶ If his prediction is correct, and there is good ground for believing that it is, this large group of voters will constitute a prize to be vigorously sought after by both parties in future campaigns. The technique of 1936 will be used again and improved as experience teaches new lessons of strategy.

Business men constitute a group well worth winning, both for the value of their influence and for the contributions that they make to campaign funds. The names of Hearst, duPont, Morgan, Moffett, Whitney, Armour, Kress, and Sloan among the heavy contributors to the Republican fund, and of wealthy business men, not so well known, among the top contributors to the Democratic party, testify to the financial value of support from this group. Of course, there is always the possibility that

¹⁶ Letter to *The New York Times*, October 31, 1936.

the support of men of great wealth may be pilloried so effectively by skillful propagandists of the opposition that it will turn out to be a liability instead of an asset. This is particularly true when class feeling is aroused, as it was in the 1936 campaign. Nevertheless, parties angle vigorously for the support of business men. Those at the top who are well known to the public, and in the "economic royalists" class, might well be left unsought after but for the fact that little business men tend to follow the big ones, and in their respective communities they are influential citizens.

In the 1936 campaign, the business men were to be found mainly in the Republican camp, in even more than the usual proportion. Several party appeals were aimed at consolidation of their support and at the conversion of hesitating brothers. The "unsound" economic practices, the heavy taxes, the huge debt, the attempts at "regimentation" of the New Deal were all vigorously condemned, with an eye on the sentiment of business men. Government entrance into the power business through the TVA and other projects was cited as an injustice to private stockholders and a dangerous movement in the direction of socialism. The American Liberty League distributed pamphlets under the following expressive titles: "Inflation," "The Holding Company Bill," "Expanding Bureaucracy," "Dangerous Experimentation," "Professors and the New Deal," "Government by Busybodies," "You Owe Thirty-one Billion Dollars." In one of their campaign pamphlets, they said, "The issue is between constitutional democracy and democratic despotism." Prominent business men with prestige declared for Landon, and their statements were widely circulated. Henry Ford was photographed with Governor Landon, and was quoted as having called him another Calvin Coolidge. "I haven't voted for twenty years," said Mr. Ford, "but I am going to vote this time." Such statements helped to further the im-

pression that the men of substance and sobriety were back of Governor Landon.

Although the cards apparently were stacked against them so far as this group was concerned, the Democrats also made a drive for the support of business men. Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy, banker and former chairman of the Securities Exchange Commission, made a radio address urging the "average business man" to vote for President Roosevelt and not to let "all business get jockeyed into a position of antagonism to the rest of the nation because a few stuffed shirts have lost their silk hats." A group of approximately thirty business men, including Marshall Field, signed a statement approving the fundamental elements of the New Deal program. In the course of it they declared that the people would no longer tolerate a government that would not actively take steps to relieve the distress resulting from the modern economic system. They endorsed "unqualifiedly the administration's position that the budget should not be balanced at the expense of human misery."¹⁷ A full page advertisement inserted in *The New York Times* of October 27 by the "Business Men's League for Franklin D. Roosevelt" said, "We are a group of plain, hard-working business men like yourself. Four years ago we had little or no business to occupy us. Today our shops and offices are busy. We are once again in the profit column. . . . Under Franklin D. Roosevelt we are confident that we shall continue along the road to a greater prosperity for all of us. And under his leadership, as he has proved, we shall be secure in the knowledge that the rights and liberties guaranteed us under the fundamental law of our land are safe."

Although the Republicans had an advantage among the business men, the Democrats had a more than counterbalancing hold on the laborers. Numerous leaders of organized labor gave President Roosevelt their enthusiastic support. On the

¹⁷ *New York Times*, October 28, 1936

evening when he was notified of his nomination and made his acceptance speech in Philadelphia, handbills bearing the endorsement of the labor unions of Pennsylvania were distributed by the thousands to people who had come to the ceremony. In New York, a Labor Party was formed and made a particular drive in his behalf among the laborers of that state. Some of their leaders were on the electoral slate, which they supported in common with the Democrats.

The Republican organization made use of the support of some conservative labor leaders and devoted considerable attention to the labor vote. The most spectacular feature of their attempt to alienate the workers from the New Deal was the drive on the Social Security Act in the last stages of the campaign. In the Middle West, many employers placed the pay of their employees in envelopes bearing a printed statement saying that a percentage of their wages would have to be deducted after January 1 as required by a "Roosevelt 'New Deal' Law" and saying, "You might get this money back in future years . . . but only if Congress decides to make the appropriation for that purpose. There is NO guarantee. Decide, before November 3—election day, whether or not you wish to take these chances." These envelopes were furnished employers by Republican campaign headquarters. Propaganda against the Social Security Act, varying in details, was sent into industrial centers in states in various sections of the country. Circulars, posters, and newspaper advertisements were used, as well as pay envelope warnings. Such propaganda aroused some apprehension among laborers, but the Democratic counter-attack and the work of the union leaders probably prevented it from being very effective.

Chairman John D. M. Hamilton indicated that the Republican party had been unsuccessful in its attempt to win the labor vote when he declared after the election in a speech to the

Women's National Republican Club that the party had "lost the pulse of the people, the confidence of the great masses of Americans." And he continued, "I venture to say that there are not many of you in close touch with those who labor. The first step that the Republican party must take is the re-establishment of such contacts."¹⁸

One of the elemental rules of campaign technique is that the candidate should give an impression of superiority. In 1928, Mr. Hoover was presented to the public as an efficient executive with an unusual knowledge of the science of administration, a man familiar with national problems and above the petty practices of professional politicians. In 1932, his managers tried various appeals in an effort to win public support. At times, he was pictured as an harassed statesman who had brought the country safely through a depression. He was a man unusually well equipped to deal with crises. He was "The Great Humanitarian." On the Democratic side, the claim was made that President Hoover had failed deplorably in the crisis of the depression. Governor Roosevelt, said the Democrats, acted when confronted with crises, whereas President Hoover waited. The record seemed to support their claims. Governor Roosevelt all the while maintained an air of assurance and charm that contributed to the impression of superiority.

Mr. Charles Michelson has said of the 1936 campaign, "Our plan was to keep, as the one issue of the campaign, the relative fitness of President Roosevelt and Governor Landon to handle the big national and international questions that must be faced by the man in the White House. . . . We presented . . . the inexperience of the Republican candidate. I believe we got across the idea that here was a man who, granted all his good qualities, either had no definite views on the great problems of the time or was willing to adopt any position that he, or his

¹⁸ *New York Times*, January 17, 1937

advisers, thought might attract votes.”¹⁹ Chairman James A. Farley overdid this when he referred slightly to Mr. Landon as the governor of “a typical prairie state.” The Republicans used this expression to arouse resentment in the “typical prairie states.” Other Democratic orators were more subtle and confined their derogatory remarks to Governor Landon without casting any reflections on his state. Once in a while, a Democratic orator would pretend that he could not remember the Republican candidate’s name or by some other stratagem seek to further the idea that Landon was an insignificant and relatively unknown figure.

Mr. Michelson says that the Republicans tried to avoid comparisons, and made various counter-attacks to divert attention from such comparisons. To that end they painted pictures of Farley as a villain personifying all the vices of Tammany politics, Tugwell as a Socialist gone mad, and Dubinsky as a communist. But the Republicans did not always avoid comparison. Part of their strategy was to create the impression that Roosevelt was unreliable, demagogic, and extravagant. Even his pleasing personality and excellent radio voice were used as evidences of his insincerity. Landon was pictured as being the exact opposite. His mediocre radio voice and lack of oratorical ability were evidence that he was sincere and dependable, just a good, substantial, unaffected citizen with common sense unadorned by art. In a last minute full-page advertisement the *Detroit Free Press* was quoted as saying: “No two men ever faced each other who were such complete opposites in personality, temperament and political technique, as Alfred M. Landon and Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . . If the God of our Republic’s destiny has reached down among us to bring forth a man to save the American system . . . then he has chosen Alfred M. Landon, so that the people, by striking contrasts, will be able to

¹⁹ *New York Times*, November 15, 1936.

see the difference." Further on in the advertisement, Governor Landon was said to have "cut taxes, cut expenses, and balanced his state budget. . . . He knows he is no superman . . . he would never win a radio audition . . . he is cautious. . . . He considers a platform a sort of anchor and not a kite. . . . He has Cleveland's rugged qualities of character."²⁰ The Republicans were presenting their leader as superior in some spheres and capitalizing upon his very weaknesses while using the elements of superiority in their opponent as points of attack.

A factor not to be lost sight of in any campaign is the oratorical ability of the nominee. Such ability is not an essential characteristic of the good candidate, but it is a desirable one. William Jennings Bryan campaigned the country thoroughly in 1896 and made many votes by his oratorical ability. If the Republicans had not had five times as much money as the Democrats to spend on the campaign,²¹ he would doubtless have won the election in spite of all the charges of radicalism and unsoundness that were hurled against him. Calvin Coolidge was not an effective orator, so he, or his publicity agents, invented the strategy of silence, and he made very few speeches and capitalized on the fact that there were few speeches. Herbert Hoover was also oratorically cumbersome and ineffective, and he spoke as little as possible in 1928. In the 1932 campaign, the fight on him became so warm that he was pushed into the battle himself and made a number of important speeches. Franklin D. Roosevelt proved to be highly effective as an orator. Mr. Michelson, discussing the 1936 campaign, referred to President Roosevelt's voice as "the best radio voice in the world," and said, "added to the prestige of the Presidency, his gift of phrases, and the quality of his speeches, insured him

²⁰ *New York Times*, November 1, 1936.

²¹ Harold R. Bruce, *American Parties and Politics*, 3rd ed., 413, 414. Henry Holt & Company.

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audiences larger than the opposing candidate could hope for. I have sometimes thought that we might have dispensed with all radio speeches and programs except those of the President without diminishing the majority that elected him."²² Such factors as organization, money, or depressions may overcome effective oratory, but it remains an asset worth many votes in any campaign.

Other elements of campaign strategy may be mentioned briefly. Slogans and symbols are useful for arousing enthusiasm and maintaining unity in the party ranks. As a Republican campaign official once said, "there is magic in the name of Lincoln." Such magic words are used as frequently as possible. When accused of radicalism in 1932, candidate Roosevelt said, "My policy is as radical as American liberty, as radical as the Constitution of the United States," which sounded very well indeed. The illusion of victory appeal is considered very important by politicians. Straw votes nearly always show that the candidate favored by the sponsor of the poll is ahead. Prophecies of victory issue from campaign headquarters almost every day. Appeals are made to the self-interest of the voters. The fighting instinct is appealed to. Moral sentiment is played upon. The whole procedure is very complicated, and only a master can strike the proper notes. Only an artist can tell what to emphasize and what to glide over. For the proper coordination of the different appeals and the effective planning and execution of campaign tactics, there must be efficient political organization from the bottom to the top. Thomas Jefferson was the first great political organizer in the United States. He built his party from the grass roots up, and he worked so successfully that he lived to see the day when the Federalist party, organized at the top but not at the bottom, was completely wiped out.

²² *New York Times*, November 15, 1936.

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Since 1929, the Democratic party has developed an organization worthy to be compared with that created by its founder. In the period between the Civil War and 1929, the Republicans held numerous advantages over the Democrats, one of which was superior organization. Among the factors that contribute to effective organization, the most important are probably money, patronage, and leadership. The Republicans had a vast preponderance of the money and the patronage, if not of leadership. From 1896 to the present, they have nearly always had more money to spend on national campaigns than their opponents, and usually from two to six times as much. However, too much success seems to be as fatal as too little success in politics. The Republicans developed weaknesses from too much success, but they were not relegated to the position of a minority party until the Democrats out-organized them.

Chief credit for the organization of the Democrats must go to their leadership, which was much superior to that of the Republicans in the post-1929 period. It should not be forgotten, however, that they also had enough money to compete on almost equal terms with the Republicans in the campaigns of 1928, 1932, and 1936. Mr. John Raskob laid the foundation for the rehabilitation of the Democratic party when, after the serious defeat of 1928, he decided to establish an organization that would function the year around and furnished the money to make this possible. National headquarters kept open and at work, and a publicity machine kept the public continually informed of the mistakes of Herbert Hoover. Mr. James A. Farley, who proved to be one of the great masters of the technique of politics, took over direction of the organization in 1932. By 1936, the organization was functioning almost to perfection. During the campaign, he spent most of his time at his desk at headquarters in New York. Thanks to the trips he had made through the various parts of the country, and his

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unusual ability to remember names and faces, he knew everybody of political importance from Maine to California. He knew which leaders were strong and which were weak, and made his plans for each state accordingly. Another element contributing to the stability of the Democratic machine was the circumstance that most of the state governments had been controlled by the Democrats since the first Roosevelt landslide. The combination of excellent leadership, enough money, and most of the state and national patronage made an organization likely to be almost invincible, and in 1936 resulted in winning all but two states for the party.

When the factors that spell victory or defeat in a campaign are being numbered, we can never leave out of consideration the economic condition of the country. No matter what the charges against the party in power, no matter what the issues may be, if times are good, the party is likely to be kept in power. When the great majority of the workers are employed at good wages, criticisms do not stick. "Prosperity absorbs all criticism," we are told. The campaigns of 1924 and 1928 furnish striking evidence of the truth of this contention. The party in power had made a record of corruption almost unequalled in the country's history. Revelations of the venality of officials in the national government before 1924 had been supplemented by a series of shocking exposures of fraud in the governments of Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ohio between 1924 and 1928. Yet there was no visible expression of resentment when the voters went to the polls. The people seemed to be not much concerned by the story of corruption. The lesson seems plain. In times of prosperity, the party in power could steal everything that was loose, from the silver in the White House to the country's natural resources, and still be returned to power unless other factors intervened. The Republicans in the pre-1929

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period recognized this principle and nearly always made prosperity one of the chief issues of the campaign.

In 1932, the shoe was on the other foot. A great depression had come in the midst of a Republican administration that had been ushered in with the happy thought that it would fill garages with cars and pots with chickens. The sufferings of the people had loosened their normal political ties and aroused so much resentment that they were set to vote *against* those in power. Whom they voted for did not matter much so long as they got a chance to vote against the officeholders. The Democrats were bound to win the election of that year unless they made gross blunders. Under the leadership of men learned in the ways of politics, they made no blunders, and swept into office because the people voted against Hoover.

But economic conditions alone will not be likely to oust the party in power unless the opposition has a good organization and an effective publicity machine ready to take advantage of the situation. The Democrats were fortunate not only in their organization, but also in their publicity agent in the period of the decline and fall of President Hoover. Mr. Charles Michelson, a former well-known newspaper correspondent, turned out to be the ablest political publicity director of modern times. Under his direction, the halo that had hovered over Hoover's head in the public mind was hammered off and horns were made to grow in its place. The Republicans were not slow to see the advantage in having a full time publicity director, and not long after Mr. Michelson's appointment, they set up a publicity bureau under the direction of Mr. James L. West.

With the establishment of these publicity bureaus, the technique of political propaganda was greatly improved. The old method had been frankly to spread party news through the press. The method of the Michelson and West bureaus was to

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aim at the front pages of the newspapers by giving out statements or speeches with a big name attached to them. Such material had real news value. The old method had been expensive, but the new method cost the party little. Senators and representatives gladly co-operated with the bureau, because they were glad to get free advertising for themselves while they also served the party. The fact that statements that went out over their names were often written at publicity headquarters did not trouble them. In addition to overseeing the issuance of such statements to the news bureaus and press associations, and carefully planning the making and meeting of charges, the publicity directors served as off-year chiefs of speakers' bureaus. In the latter capacity they provided speakers for political rallies and in many cases even wrote the speeches.

During political campaigns, their activities were, of course, greatly increased. Then the directors had to decide what mediums of publicity would justify the most expenditure of money, and maintain a general supervision over the tactics of the party workers. It has been estimated that 100,000,000 pamphlets, fly-sheets, and other pieces of literature were sent out from Democratic headquarters in 1936. The publicity director had to decide whether one particular method of approach would yield better results than another as the circumstances of the campaign were presented to him. Mr. Michelson has said that the business of press agency is "wholly opportunistic," and that "no all-embracing rules can be laid down, for every campaign presents a different front, and that front is likely to change from day to day."²⁸ Such a "business" obviously calls for the exercise of skill of a high order and a high degree of sensitiveness to public opinion. The period from 1929 to 1936 gave opportunity for the exercise of the genius that the Democratic leaders possessed

²⁸ *New York Times*, November 15, 1936.

in the simultaneous following and leading of public opinion that is a characteristic of political artistry.

In the tangled web of tactics woven by skilled manipulators of the public mind, the voter searches for the real issues on which he should pass judgment. Will his vote merely go to the side that is led by the men most adept at the art of manufacturing public opinion, or will his judgment lead him through to the basic issues and permit him to make a rational choice? If, as Ibsen's Dr. Stockman said, "the stupid people are in an absolutely overwhelming majority all the world over," there can be no doubt as to the answer. It must be that public opinion will become the property of the most skilled manipulator, and if that is true, democracy is doomed. But the people of the countries where democracy is solidly established as a result of long and steady growth give not infrequent evidence that they know what they want and how to get it through the use of their political power. Where opposition as well as affirmation is allowed, the people themselves develop a certain amount of skill in politics. Their minds are sharpened by the democratic process and they learn to disregard many of the emphasized irrelevancies of political campaigns and vote for what they want.

X

LEADERS

ON July 28, 1925, the body of William Jennings Bryan lay in a casket in a little house in Dayton, Tennessee. All day people came from the shops and mills and farms—men, women, and children—for a last look at the face of the man who had been their leader for a generation. In the afternoon a memorial service was held on the lawn, and then the casket was taken to the train that was to carry it to Washington. Everywhere along the route of the funeral train, flags were at half staff. Men stood with uncovered heads in the fields as it went by. Work was suspended in all the little towns between Dayton and Chattanooga, in order that the workmen could go to the stations. Employees of the Southern Railroad stood with bowed heads when the car was stopped in the cities. At Chattanooga, where a stop of considerable length was made, several thousand people came to see the casket. According to a newspaper reporter's account, they "did not shove, or chatter, but walked down the station platform as though it had been the aisle of a church." On July 31 the "Commoner's" body was taken to Arlington Cemetery to be buried, while members of his family, officials of the government, former members of President Wilson's cabinet, Democratic leaders of past and present power, labor leaders, and several hundred others braved a penetrating rain to be present at the simple service.

Some unseen tie with strength like steel binds people to a great leader and makes them follow, with confidence that he will lead them where they want to go. When Bryan died, Will

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Rogers wrote that he had not won elections because he did not start out with enough followers. "But through all his campaigns he always kept his same bunch." The tributes paid him by his followers when he died were eloquent evidence of their loyalty to him and of the sense of personal loss that came to them with his death. The power of a leader is stronger than life or death. Mr. Bryan, expressing appreciation in his memoirs for the loyalty of his friends, told how a Nebraska farmer once got out of bed in the middle of the night and rode ten miles to show the Bryan party the road to their destination, after they had lost their way. When they offered to pay him, he refused with an injured air, saying, "Do you think I would do this for money? I am a Bryan man."¹ And a Bryan man was a Bryan man until he died. So too there were La Follette Progressives, and followers of Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson Democrats. In 1936, Senator Carter Glass gave evidence of the hold that Woodrow Wilson had upon his associates, when he rose to defend the dead President's honor against aspersions cast upon it by another senator. "Beating his desk until his knuckles bled, his voice first shaking with emotion, then rasping with anger, the Virginian opened wide his noteworthy vocabulary to characterize one whom he said had made a 'shocking assault' upon the character of Woodrow Wilson, expressing regret that the Senate rules kept him from using the word 'coward' in describing the man and 'mendacious' in describing his attack."² Great leaders capture the minds and emotions of men, and strengthen their hold with the passing of time.

In a democracy, the people are supreme in power but their opinions will be unorganized and ineffective for the accom-

¹ From *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, by William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, 203. By permission of The John C. Winston Company.

² *New York Times*, January 18, 1936.

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plishment of their more or less hazy desires unless great leaders come forward to crystallize opinion around a program. Leaders give definiteness of direction to public opinion and help the people to get what they want, at the same time helping to make clear what it is they want and how they can get it. Sometimes we are told that public opinion is what leaders make it, but this is only partially true. No man can make public opinion out of whole cloth or change the fundamental viewpoints of the people. Perhaps that is the chief reason why no country whose citizens are trained in the processes of popular government and educated to its ideal has yet been led to establish a dictatorship. Leaders are such by a combination of circumstance and their own ability. They do not follow their followers, but they are leaders because they lead in a direction that the people want to go.

The real test of a leader is when he changes his program or suggests some new step. Senator La Follette met such a test in 1924 when he was a candidate for President on a third-party ticket. His state of Wisconsin had been overwhelmingly Republican for years, but La Follette carried the state, and by doing so showed that the loyalty of the people to him and his ideals was greater than their loyalty to the Republican party. A few years later, Senator George Norris demonstrated that he could be elected to the United States Senate from Nebraska running as a Republican, as a Democrat, or as an Independent. Such happenings do not indicate that the people follow blindly, but rather that they have given their loyalty to a program or to principles with which they associate their leader so completely that they believe support of him is the best way to realize their aims. When Nebraska was considering the abolition of its bicameral legislature and the establishment of a one-house legislature, a farmer of the state was overheard saying, "I don't know much about it, but the politicians are against it and Nor-

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ris is for it, so I'm for it." He was facing a new step, the wisdom of which he did not feel confident to judge alone, but his faith in Senator Norris gave him assurance that it would help him to further the principles in which he and the Senator both believed.

Leadership in public life carries with it a great responsibility. The Nebraska farmer who had to vote on the proposal to establish a unicameral legislature was one of many who followed Senator Norris in the belief that the new law-making body would improve the quality of their government. Probably the Norris influence was responsible for its adoption. If the Senator was wrong, the whole state will suffer; if he was right, the state may have pioneered in a step that will have far-reaching effects for good in the whole United States.

When Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war against Germany, he said: "It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful people into war. . . ." It was "a fearful thing" that he was doing, but his message that day was merely the climax of his policy toward the belligerents, for he had been making decisions for two years that had led him to that occasion. He and Secretary of State Bryan had differed over the method of dealing with Germany. Each had wanted to avoid war if possible, and each had insisted upon his own method. Wilson had been in a position to have his way, and finally it led to war. Was war, under the circumstances, the only possible course that a free people could take with honor? Wilson thought it was, and the people went along with his point of view. The cost in this case was beyond any accurate comprehension by the average man. But the leader always carries great responsibility on his shoulders when he deals with issues affecting the welfare and the happiness of the people. He sells his ideas to them, and if his ideas are good, the public reaps the benefit; if they are mistaken, the public welfare may be endangered by his errors.

Some great men not only spread their ideas and lead public opinion, but they work so successfully that they establish for the people a pattern of what statesmanship should be. Other leaders try to live up to it and are measured by its standards. William Jennings Bryan once referred to Thomas Jefferson as "the greatest constructive statesman whom the world has ever known; the grandest warrior who ever battled for human liberty!" Perhaps the young Nebraska congressman was making his statement a little strong for oratorical effect, but the fact remains that Jefferson has been a pattern for democratic statesmen ever since he lived, and his ideas have influenced the content of almost every Democratic platform since his time. Lincoln, as the successful leader of a great nationalist movement and the emancipator of an enslaved race also set a standard for leadership and became a symbol of democracy.³ Jackson, Cleveland, Roosevelt, Bryan, and La Follette have in a somewhat lesser degree had a similar influence on history. Such men improve the tone of public life and strengthen its best traditions. Public opinion may move to the measure of their ideals for generations after they are gone.

Whenever a group of individuals are interested in the achievement of a goal or seeking the solution of a common problem, certain members of the group assume positions of leadership. But the greatest leaders come at irregular intervals. Times of crisis seem to bring forth outstanding leaders, perhaps because the leader in such a period has a greater chance for accomplishment, and his name associated with great events passes into history as a kind of myth. The characteristics of leaders vary from time to time as conditions vary. Different periods call for different types of leadership, and the successful leader must have the qualities that fit the needs of his age. Woodrow Wilson was a highly successful leader before the World War and

³ Charles Edward Merriam, *Four American Party Leaders*, 20. The Macmillan Co.

during the World War, but he failed to carry the people with him after the war. Abraham Lincoln would probably have lost command of the situation had he lived during the Reconstruction period. Herbert Hoover seemed to be marked for a successful administration as President during a period of prosperity, but lost his hold on the people completely when the depression came. They wanted a Roosevelt then. There is no hard and fast pattern of leadership—no single quality of body, mind, or temperament that is absolutely essential to the leader. But a study of great leaders reveals that certain characteristics are common equipment, and when possessed by a man, almost invariably mark him for leadership in greater or less degree.

One of the qualities most valuable to a leader and most likely to bring him power is the ability to understand the forces that affect the mind of the people and to see what the people want and will support. The great leader is likely to be unusually sensitive to the currents of public opinion and popular feelings. Abraham Lincoln was able to sense the climactic development of the opposition to slavery and the movement for nationalism in his time. His policies in the crisis leading to the Civil War expressed the dominant feeling of the period. Theodore Roosevelt was unusually sensitive to the currents of popular thought in his age. He came at a period of democratic revolution against corruption in government and the dominance of big business interests, and he attacked the evils that public opinion opposed, without taking any steps radical enough to alienate the general public. Woodrow Wilson was also remarkably sensitive to the currents of social and political feeling, until the latter part of his second administration. His leadership in progressive legislation before the World War gave effective expression to the popular sentiment that had led to the democratic movement of the early twentieth century. Under his direction the will of the people was given definite form in the enactment

of significant progressive statutes. During the World War, he served as the spokesman for the opinion, not only of his own country, but of all the allied peoples. President Wilson did not get his knowledge of public sentiment by a wide variety of group contacts. His general knowledge of the character and thought of the people and their historical tendencies coupled with an almost uncanny ability to sense the aspirations of the people seems to have accounted for his ability to crystallize public opinion and express the common feeling in clear and striking fashion. Whenever a statesman can no longer discern the currents of political thought he can no longer lead the people of his own generation, although his ideas may influence the future.

The leader must have a practical sense of what he can accomplish. He should be idealistic enough to point the way forward, but not so idealistic that he will get too far ahead of the people. As Woodrow Wilson said, "Great principles must be worked out cautiously," for, "Public opinion must not be outstripped, but kept pace with."⁴ The statesman can seldom carry out his program in its entirety. He must be willing to compromise on details when partial success is preferable to complete failure. He must be able to analyze situations and know what course of action will secure the popular support necessary to its success. Political institutions and political ideas do not spring forth full born; they develop through years of growth. The statesman who leads most effectively realizes this fundamental truth and shapes his actions accordingly.

Facility in personal contacts with individuals of various types and an ability to hold together different groups of people in a common program are invaluable qualities of leadership. The leader must do much of his most effective work in committee, in the council room, or in conferences with other leaders. If he knows the interests, the points of weakness and strength, the

⁴ *College and State*, Vol. I, 15. Harper & Brothers.

ambitions and emotions of the people with whom he works, and can play upon them, he will be able to win support for his cause.

William Jennings Bryan was a leader endowed with an unusual genius for friendship and for political group contacts. William G. McAdoo said, "to keep hating him, one had to avoid meeting him."⁵ A *New York Times* article in 1915 declared that Bryan, although a poor Secretary of State, was a highly useful member of the administration because of his political work, and said, "Secretary Bryan's rooms are constantly crowded with visitors; he sees them in streams; he is one of the busiest of Cabinet officers; he works indefatigably, incessantly, often far into the night. . . . Mr. Wilson's amazing success has been a theme of general comment and surprise, especially in view of the fact that previous Democratic Administrations have been wrecked by opposition in their own following. . . . He has put through his entire legislative programme without a serious hitch. This success of the Administration, unparalleled in history, has been largely due to Mr. Bryan."⁶ Wilson himself was not so successful in personal contacts on a large scale as his Secretary of State was. He gave an impression of aloofness and he was sometimes undiplomatically frank in his remarks about politicians, although he was very charming to his intimate friends and won their intense devotion. It is not surprising that his greatest period of achievement in domestic statesmanship was the period during which the Bryan leadership, strong where he was relatively weak, was joined to his own.

Initiative and courage are other characteristics common to men who lead. The leader goes ahead, instead of following others. He is quick to discern possible courses of action and prompt to make his decisions, although some risk may be involved. And he must have the courage to fight for his convic-

⁵ William Gibbs McAdoo, *Crowded Years*, 338. Houghton Mifflin Company.

⁶ *New York Times*, January 9, 1915.

tions even though his personal welfare is thrown into the balance. Grover Cleveland is a man who has come to be regarded almost as the personification of courage and integrity. His character might be described by John Richard Green's picture of Simon de Montfort as a man who "stood like a pillar unshaken by promise or threat or fear of death by the oath he had sworn." Cleveland's political success seems to have been mainly due to that quality of his. Charles Willis Thompson, writing of Bryan's part in the Democratic convention of 1912, said, "At the beginning he was defeated, but defeat never affected Bryan in the least in all his life, and this time, as usual, he only went on fighting."⁷ There were many occasions when Bryan put principles before his personal success. Any great leader comes to crises at times in his career when compromise seems wrong and he must decide to fight out the issue regardless of consequences to himself. Senator Robert M. La Follette furnished one of the most dramatic illustrations of personal courage when he stood up in the Senate, in the face of a bitterly hostile audience on the floor and in the galleries, and, by himself, delayed the declaration of war for a day when the madness of war psychology had already seized hold of the popular mind. He faced the certain condemnation of the present without any assurance that he would ride the storm and find popular vindication in the future. One of the chief differences between the statesman and the ordinary politician is in the matter of courage. Fearlessness commonly turns out to be wiser than caution, because the people admire a brave man and follow him; but the cautious politician is afraid to gamble the immediate with the ultimate.

Facility in the dramatic expression of the sentiments of large groups of people is a talent of prime importance to a leader.

⁷ *New York Times*, June 9, 1915.

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Thomas Jefferson was the most successful political leader in American history, and one of the factors contributing most to his success was his skill with the pen. Woodrow Wilson gave the Allied cause a powerful impetus and the Allied peoples a feeling that they were fighting for something that made all their sacrifices worth while, at the same time that he weakened the morale of the enemy by his ability to express in writing the highest hopes of all mankind.

Other statesmen have possessed a talent for winning support by oratory. In the age of Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Benton, oratory seemed to be an essential element of leadership. At other times it has not always been of such paramount importance, although it is always a valuable asset to a leader. Abraham Lincoln was a great orator, if judged by results rather than conventional standards of oratory. His voice was not a particularly pleasant one to hear, but he impressed his audiences with his sincerity and ability, and swayed their emotions and opinions. A generation later, William Jennings Bryan was the outstanding orator in public life. In contrast with Lincoln, he was handsome in appearance and his voice was rich and full. With a widely different technique, he too could carry away his audiences and make them follow him with deep devotion for his cause. His greatest single oratorical triumph was in the convention of 1896, when he took his audience by storm. His speech on that occasion was considered by many experienced political observers who heard it as "the most electrifying oratorical effort" in American political history. A contemporary journalist wrote, "The scenes at the conclusion of Mr. Bryan's speech were indescribable. He was lifted from his feet by his enthusiastic Nebraska supporters, and the vast audience went into hysterical frenzies. Mr. Bryan could have been nominated by acclamation at the conclusion of his speech on Thursday, if

he had been willing to allow the regular order of proceedings to be overruled.”⁸ As Bryan himself described the effect of his oratory, “The audience seemed to rise and sit down as one man. At the close of a sentence it would rise and shout, and when I began upon another sentence, the room was as still as a church. There was inspiration in the faces of the delegates.”⁹ Almost thirty years later, in Dayton, Tennessee, a reporter wrote, “Mr. Bryan’s manner with these people is most persuasive. His voice seems to reach out and caress them with its gentle cadences; his arms stretch out over them as if they were those closest to his heart and he would gather them.”¹⁰

President Franklin D. Roosevelt is another leader whose power is to a considerable extent due to his oratory. He has the ability to present an issue in its simplest terms, and to carry his audience with him against the opposition. He assumes that the audience is on his side. When speaking to a crowd in front of him, his voice is loud and clear and eloquent with emotional expression. Over the radio he talks quietly and in a conversational tone that carries an impression of reasonableness. His listeners feel that he is right, that he is fighting their battles, and they give him their support.

Other qualities common to leaders may be mentioned briefly. Self-confidence is a decided asset unless carried to an irritating extreme. A man who speaks with assurance sometimes makes a stronger impression than one who reasons with his audience. Physical strength is a characteristic of most great leaders. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, and Franklin D. Roosevelt have all been men of great physical strength. Thomas Jefferson once prescribed as an educational

⁸ *Review of Reviews*, Vol. XIV (1896), 137.

⁹ From *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, by William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, 115. By permission of The John C. Winston Company.

¹⁰ *New York Times*, July 13, 1925.

program for young men the following schedule: "Until eight in the morning he should confine himself to natural philosophy, morals, and religion; reading treatises on astronomy, chemistry, anatomy, agriculture, botany, international law, moral philosophy, and metaphysics. . . . From eight to twelve he was to read law, and condense cases. . . . From twelve to one, he was advised to 'read politics,' in Montesquieu, Locke, Priestley, Malthus, and the Parliamentary Debates. In the afternoon he was to relieve his mind with history; and, when evening closed in, he might regale himself with literature, criticism, rhetoric, and oratory."¹¹ Jefferson followed this schedule substantially himself, but he also got enough recreation to preserve his physical vigor. James Madison, on the other hand, followed it without adding recreation. The result was that Madison became a walking encyclopedia respected for his wide range of knowledge, but a man lacking in personal force and magnetism. Originality, imagination, enthusiasm, and patience are other qualities valuable to a leader, and possessed in greater or less degree by most of those who reach the first rank.

The methods used by political leaders to achieve their ends are as different as the personalities of the men. Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote in 1932 that it was necessary to compromise between the ideal and the practical in order to accomplish what was most worth while, but he added that such compromises must not condone corruption or inefficiency. The decisions that the politician makes should be for the long-range benefit of the people.¹² President Roosevelt has followed this policy in working toward his objectives with the skill of a master. As a *New York Times* writer suggested in 1937, President Roosevelt is a "fighter" in the sense of "one who strives for a desired end" not in the sense of one who drives straight ahead regardless of

¹¹ James Parton, *Life of Thomas Jefferson*, 61. Houghton Mifflin Company.

¹² Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Government Not Politics*, 20, 21. Covici Friede, Inc.

obstacles to accomplish his purpose. Much of his "fighting" is behind the scenes and consists of "individual persuasion, log-rolling, patronage-mongering and sheer bluff." The President "is an opportunist as to method," not hesitating to change his tactics in the midst of the battle if circumstances indicate the wisdom of such a change. "His technique is to ask more than he expects to get; employ every device, public and private, to obtain it; pull a long face when he has to compromise, and then walk off, often as not, with all he really wanted in the first place."¹³ The Roosevelt willingness to compromise and to make skillful use of the artistry of practical politics has led some of his critics to say that he is weak and unstable, but the evidence indicates, as other observers have pointed out, that he is unstable only as to method; he does not give up his objectives, but moves toward them with all the tenacity that characterizes the Dutch from which his family sprang. He works to obtain a statesman's goal by the methods of a politician, which, after all, is perhaps the best way to get any place in a government managed largely by politicians.

Abraham Lincoln is another leader who showed himself a hard-headed politician in the methods by which he worked toward idealistic aims. He did not hesitate to barter patronage for votes when votes were necessary for the success of his measures. Neither did he hesitate to ignore the provisions of the Constitution that were supposed to guarantee the individual's right to a writ of habeas corpus, indictment by grand jury, and trial by jury when he thought such provisions stood in the way of effective prosecution of the Civil War. In his choice of cabinet members and in his relations with them he revealed ability as a practical leader. Himself, seemingly inefficient and disorderly in his personal habits, he chose as his chief advisers

¹³ Delbert Clark, "As Roosevelt Wages Political Battle," *New York Times Magazine*, March 28, 1937, 2.

men of efficiency, dignity, and order, seasoned with one or two spoils politicians. He was not exacting in his demands upon them, and he permitted a certain amount of insubordination, but he maintained his personal ascendancy and dominated the field in matters of importance.

On the other hand, Woodrow Wilson, although a wise and able political leader, sometimes failed to play politics with the politicians in the most effective manner. The idea of using patronage to win support disgusted him, and at the beginning of his first term as President he announced that he would decline to see applicants for office in person except when he had himself invited the interview. Appointments were to be made mainly through the department heads. He hoped to get "the best men in the nation" for the most important positions. In his attitude toward appointments he was inclined to be very impersonal—a point of view not likely to meet with enthusiastic response from the politicians in Congress. His Postmaster-General, A. S. Burleson, a man who had served sixteen years in Congress, very early in the administration took occasion to explain to Wilson the necessity of keeping the congressmen in good humor. Burleson's advice was that the party could be made progressive most effectively if the congressmen were consulted in regard to patronage and their position in the home districts considered sympathetically. This advice made an impression on the President, and he adopted the practice of leaving many patronage matters and the handling of congressmen to his Postmaster-General.¹⁴ This practice, along with the Bryan influence, probably furnished much of the necessary element of practical politics that made possible the unity of the Democratic party and the achievements of the first Wilson administration.

One of Wilson's greatest sources of strength was his almost

¹⁴ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson Life and Letters*, Vol. IV, 43-50. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

prophetic insight into the mind and heart of the people. He used his great gift of dramatic expression to crystallize public opinion and marshal it for his cause. He knew when to speak; and when he spoke it seemed that he voiced the best thoughts of the people. When the lobbyists descended upon Washington, a timely statement addressed to the public nullified their influence. When the United States faced war with Germany, President Wilson made it seem that there was no alternative, and that the cause was one for which any man would be proud to die. At the close of the war, when the opponents of the League of Nations launched their attack, he started to take his cause to the people. Although the reaction against idealism of the post-war period had already set in, his speeches were powerful in the Wilsonian tradition, and well received. How effective they would have been had he not fallen before his trip was done, nobody knows. Whatever may have contributed to Woodrow Wilson's climb to his position of first rank in leadership among statesmen, certainly his use of his genius for expression must be regarded as a factor of prime importance. That he was more than just a master propagandist of the moment is perhaps indicated by the fact that many of his speeches seem as timely today as when he made them. His warning that autocracies and not democracies are the enemies of world peace, his recognition of the need for making the world safe for democracy, and his criticism of international trade barriers were made in statements that will always be timely and will always be an inspiration to men who are looking for leadership in an imperfect world.

In the technique of getting favorable publicity for himself, a technique useful to leaders, President Wilson was not as adept as some other statesmen have been. He was inclined to be impatient with newspaper reporters, and sometimes he was irritated by their reports. His failure to help the newspaper men

and give them his confidence probably contributed to his loss of popular support in the period from 1918 to 1920, when the Republican propagandists and politicians worked so effectively against him.

For the skillful touch in publicity we need not look farther than the Roosevelts, both first and second. Theodore Roosevelt usually prepared his material well in advance for the gentlemen of the press, and he knew how to give adroit interviews. He kept the newspapers full of comment on himself. He knew when to wear cowboy clothes, when to hunt big game, and when to offer to raise a division of troops for service in the war. President Franklin D. Roosevelt has shown himself equally masterful in the art of getting publicity. Succeeding a man for whom the newspaper reporters had felt an intense personal dislike, he dealt with them in a free and friendly fashion that made them like him as enthusiastically as they had disliked his predecessor. But he has not depended upon the friendship of reporters alone to get him before the public in a favorable light. In 1936, he arranged to deliver his annual message to Congress at a night session, in order that it would serve not only as a message to Congress but as a political speech to almost everyone in the United States who owned a radio. Said Mr. Arthur Krock, "Mr. Roosevelt is the best showman the White House has lodged since modern science made possible such an effective dual performance."¹⁵ Republican Senators and Liberty League orators might assail the administration, the Supreme Court might nullify its measures, but the President had got the largest audience of them all.

Woodrow Wilson made a somewhat similar stroke of leadership in his time when he revived the custom of delivering the Presidential message to Congress in person instead of sending it in writing as Presidents had done since Jefferson's time; but

¹⁵ *New York Times*, January 2, 1936.

the technique of leadership publicity has shown great improvement in the relatively short period since Woodrow Wilson's Presidency. The radio gives the modern political leader a great new instrument for reaching the public on a vaster scale than ever before, and it tests the ingenuity of the leader. President Wilson addressed Congress in person and took a great step forward. Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed Congress in person and made his message a fireside chat to all the American people in their homes. Publicity agents have improved their methods so effectively that the work of the Democratic Committee's Mr. Michelson is as different from the publicity work of the Democratic party in 1912 as a Ford V-8 is different from a model T. Publicity becomes increasingly important to the leader as part of the technique by which he wins and keeps the support of the public.

The successful leader never loses his touch with the public or with public opinion. He has sources of contact that enable him to sense the direction in which the currents of opinion are moving. For the local leader, personal contacts with the people are possible on a scale sufficient to keep him informed. A New Jersey Assemblyman, speaking with the wisdom of an experienced politician, said recently on this subject, "It is most necessary that you move around in all environments of life with an open mind, not too sensitive feelings and with a desire of listening to other people instead of doing all the talking yourself. It is most necessary to be ever willing and ready to learn, even from the most humble."

Leaders on a larger scale must still depend upon personal contacts for a certain amount of their information as to public opinion, but they have to supplement such contacts with other devices. Letters from the people is one way in which public opinion expresses itself. A letter comes to the executive offices, saying, "We still believe in the federal loan, but unless some-

thing is done to speed it up suggest changing it to an old age pension," or another arrives, containing such a statement as, "There are one or two persons in the Farm Credit Administration who should be cutting cheese in the back end of some grocery store," or "Flies come in through the eaves—wish Wallace and the Farm Bureau had them instead of getting in my place." Such letters indicate something about the drift of public opinion that will not be unnoticed by the President's secretarial staff. These critical letters will be weighed against those such as the one sent to the President by a man who wrote, "I think you are a reincarnation of Moses." Too many critical letters will be regarded as a danger signal.

Congressmen are leaders who usually develop the technique of measuring the opinion of their constituents to a high degree of efficiency. The representative must be a candidate for reelection every two years. If he does not keep his ear to the ground, he will not last long. Congressmen pay some attention to letters from people in the home district, but they are aware that such letters are not always typical of opinion in that district. One representative says: "Personal letters from home assist me materially in arriving at a decision." Another says, "You find that personal letters come to you usually from those who have some particular interest to serve." A New York congressman, after long experience, concludes that "Correspondence representing a fair cross-section would be most helpful, but in recent years its effectiveness has been diminished by stimulated propaganda."

Some political leaders display a similar wariness when using newspapers as barometers of public opinion. Experience has taught them that newspapers have some value when used for that purpose along with other indicators. Most congressmen read the newspapers from the home district very carefully, and many are probably influenced by newspaper opinion more than

they would be if they could measure the sentiment of their constituents more accurately. However the old ones know, as one former Representative expressed it, that the press "has to a large extent passed from the altruistic and patriotic state to the mercenary plane."

Probably the most reliable way in which the representative measures public opinion is by his own reaction and by what he knows of the feelings of his constituents, supplemented by contacts with people whom he trusts or with others who serve as "samplers." An Alabama congressman says, "Personal contacts and the ability to read mass psychology will help you more than any other way to find out what public opinion really is. . . . I 'feel out' public opinion by personal contacts more than any other way, also by contacting and taking the advice of friends whose good judgment and sound common sense I rely upon." One of his colleagues from the Middle West says, "In every Congressional District there are citizens who have but one interest and that is the interest of the community and state in which they reside. These folks are most helpful in furnishing the sentiment and needs of the community."

The successful leader is not simply a weathercock of opinion. He does not win the public by resounding words or smart tricks alone. He must appeal to reason as well as to emotion, although he will, if he is wise, not neglect the latter. Appeal to emotion alone soon wears out, whereas appeal to reason tends toward the development of stable opinions.

The kind of leaders that a public chooses is good evidence of its character and a test of its discernment. In Plato's ideal state, he proposed that the leaders be among the most intelligent, powerful, and patriotic of the citizens, "those individuals who appear to us, after due observation, to be remarkable above others for the zeal with which, through their whole life, they have done what they have thought advantageous to the state,

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and inflexibly refused to do what they thought the reverse." This is a high standard that Plato sets. No way has yet been found of insuring its complete realization in practice. Human beings are influenced by qualities of leadership that do not always carry with them the maximum of either ability or character, but the leaders whose reputations live longest in public esteem are those who approach most closely the Platonic standard.

XI

RABBLE ROUSERS

TWENTY-THREE hundred years ago, Aristophanes turned his caustic pen to the description of the demagogues of Greece, and in describing the men whom popular opinion at the moment seemed to favor, he spoke pertinently of the demagogues of all time. In his play, *The Knights*, the following conversation contains his picture of the species:

SAUSAGE SELLER. Tell me; why, how shall I who am a sausage seller become a *great* man?

DEMOSTHENES. For this very reason, truly . . . because you are a knave, and from the market-place and impudent.

SAUSAGE SELLER. I do not consider myself worthy to have great power.

DEMOSTHENES. Alas! whatever's the reason that you are not worthy? You seem to me to be conscious of something gentlemanly. Are you of gentle birth?

SAUSAGE SELLER. No, by the gods, unless to come of blackguards be so.

DEMOSTHENES. O happy is your fortune! What an advantage you have for statesmanship!

SAUSAGE SELLER. But, my good sir, I don't even possess any education, beyond my letters, and them, to be sure, as bad as bad can be.

DEMOSTHENES. This alone is an obstacle to you, that *you do know them*, even as bad as bad can be. For the character of popular leader no longer belongs to a man of education, nor yet to one good in his morals, but to the ignorant and abominable. Then don't neglect what the gods in their oracles offer you.

William Jennings Bryan said, "The difference between a demagogue and a statesman is that the former advocates what

he thinks will be popular, regardless of the effect that it may ultimately have upon the people to whom he appeals; the statesman advocates what he believes to be the best for the country regardless of the immediate effect which it may have upon himself. One is willing to sacrifice the permanent interests of others to advance his own temporary interests, while the other is willing to sacrifice his own temporary interests to advance the public welfare."¹ The distinction might be carried further and a contrast drawn between the aims and methods of these two types of leaders. The aim of the demagogue is primarily his own advancement. His method is the use of emotional appeals. In both respects he does not necessarily differ completely from the statesman. The difference is largely one of degree, for the statesman too thinks of himself, and makes use of the emotional appeal to advance his purposes. But the demagogue thinks entirely of his immediate welfare and he plays safe by riding always the contemporary band wagon, whereas the statesman thinks not only in terms of himself but also of his country's welfare, and he is willing to risk his present security in order to fight for what he considers right. In so doing he may feel that he is building a place for himself in the future, even though he meet rejection and defeat in the present. The demagogue never risks the spoils of the present for monuments of the future. In his appeal to the public, the demagogue shuns reason as he would a plague, and depends upon non-rational appeals, whereas the statesman bases his arguments upon reason and uses emotional appeals with some moderation because he knows that emotion strengthens his cause immediately but reason builds it on a firm foundation.

The politician who resorts to rabble-rousing tactics is working for his own advancement, but he never admits it if he follows

¹ From *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, by William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, 260. By permission of The John C. Winston Company.

the generally accepted technique. He should not even admit it to his most intimate associates. He must say always and everywhere that he is the servant of the people and sacrificing himself for their welfare. The late Senator Huey Long illustrated the proper approach when he said, "The poor people of the country have someone to guide them—old Huey P. Long, the champion of the people." The Honorable Hamilton Fish followed the accepted form when he modestly mentioned himself as a Presidential possibility in 1935 and then declared that he had no personal ambitions, that he would not consider the Presidency if it was merely a party matter, but that he would yield if the welfare of the country demanded his services. If the politician can convince *himself* that he is thinking only of the welfare of the people, so much the better; at any rate, he must proclaim it both in public and in private, year in and year out, and he must convince the voters that it is true if he is to succeed in winning and holding their support.

The leader who would be successful in rabble-rousing never allows convictions to stand in his path. He watches until he sees which way the crowd is going and then "leads" in that direction. He is like the Frenchman in the troubled days of the Revolution who is supposed to have dashed to the window when he heard a mob going by, and then to have exclaimed, "There go my followers. I must follow them. I am their leader." He will always insist that he is true to his convictions. The public may think of him as standing like a rock for the principles in which he believes. The people admire such a man. But, as a matter of fact, if the politician is going to stand like a rock for anything, he had better make sure first that it is what the people want, or that he can convince them that it is what they think they want.

Some very accomplished demagogues have appeared and flourished in the United States at various times in our history,

but candor compels us to admit, much as we may hate to admit that Europe can excel us in anything, that the most successful demagogues of the modern age have been the products of European politics. When a man can rise from house painter to "All Highest" by the unadulterated methods of demagoguery, or another can by only slightly different tactics with loud talk and tough looks become the dictator of his people, and both together can bluff the rest of the world while they make waste paper of all the accepted rules of international relations, that is real achievement.

When the Rexist leader, Leon Degrelle, who for a time aspired to become the Hitler and Mussolini of Belgium, wanted to perfect his technique, he went to Dr. Goebbels in Berlin for counsel. Dr. Goebbels has made the methods of demagoguery a science. To the young neophyte from Belgium he summed up the best technique as developed by the masters of Europe in the following advice: "Work exclusively by parliamentary methods. Fascinate and terrify the crowds by painting the Communist peril in darkest colors. Keep the ball rolling by resounding polemics. Send back every reproach like a boomerang at the head of your opponent. . . . Above all, know how to amuse and delight the crowd. Be more lively than the others; everything depends on that."² Probably no better brief and authoritative description of technique can be found, but the American student of the subject will be interested in a more detailed discussion of methods and characteristics with particular application to American leaders and American conditions.

The most successful rabble rousers are men with strong voices and energetic bodies. The importance of such qualifications is illustrated in the case of Theodore Bilbo, of Mississippi. When he retired from the governorship of his state under a cloud because of various scandals connected with his adminis-

² Quoted in *The Nation*, Vol. CXLIII (1936), 619.

tration, he seemed to be down and out politically. However, in 1934 he decided to be a candidate for the United States Senate against the man then holding the office. The odds were against him, but he started on a campaign designed to give almost every voter in Mississippi at least one chance to hear his voice. Through the hot summer months he went up and down the state speaking as many as six or eight times a day at camp meetings, county fairs, barbecues, and political gatherings. In all, he delivered more than a thousand speeches in that campaign, all of them full-length and forceful. He spoke in every county and in almost every village in the state. His victory in the election was a tribute to his technique and the physical qualities that enabled him to reach all the voters and appeal to them by word of mouth.

William Jennings Bryan won his first nomination to the Presidency almost entirely by a speech. When Huey Long wanted to re-elect Mrs. Caraway as senator from Arkansas, he took his sound trucks up from Louisiana, toured Arkansas, and demonstrated that his oratory was as effective there as in his own state. The radio priest in Michigan at one time exerted considerable influence and kept congressmen uneasy in their seats because of his ability as a radio spellbinder. Some men who might otherwise have succeeded have failed to achieve success in swaying the masses because they lacked oratorical ability. William Randolph Hearst at one time seemed to possess many of the qualities of a first-class demagogue, but he could not orate successfully, and he failed to achieve success in politics, save as he exerted an influence through his papers. But the tongue is more powerful than the pen when they compete for the control of human emotions. In fact, a facile tongue, a loud voice, and the energy to use them on the people day in and day out are basic qualities that the demagogue must have before he can make effective use of other technique.

The ability to tell funny stories is an asset of great value in the United States, but not absolutely essential. Former Senator Heflin, of Alabama, is one of the best story tellers among American politicians. His formula for the successful gathering of Alabama votes included a generous use of humorous tales of rural characters and Negroes, whom he could mimic to perfection. His stories would be followed by an application, often irrelevant, to the issues of the moment. Most successful orators, whether demagogues or not, have a sense of humor and sprinkle their speeches with it. Oratory without such seasoning now and then is likely to grow tiresome to the average individual. However, some men have succeeded in gathering tremendous followings by emotional appeals and oratory devoid of humor. Dr. Townsend, of old-age pension fame, seems to have been notably lacking in a sense of humor. He and his managers made use of a technique in which humor would have seemed incongruous. An aura of saintliness was built around the doctor. He was classed with Washington and Lincoln, and even Christ. One does not expect a man posing as a new Messiah to tell funny stories. We may perhaps draw the conclusion that humor is unnecessary, and even out of place, when political pipers are using the "religious crusade" technique to attract followers.

When demagogues are perfecting their methods for gathering votes, they are likely to pay considerable attention to their own dress and manner of life. What the successful politician will wear or eat or drink, the kind of house in which he lives, the language that he uses, will depend upon what will make the most favorable impression upon his constituents. Unpressed trousers and slouchy hats are supposed to make a more favorable impression on the common people than would more elegant apparel. The politician who refuses to wear a dress suit arouses a sympathetic feeling in the heart of the great mass of

average men who dislike to wear dress suits or regard them as emblems of social snobbery. Suspenders properly displayed and publicized seem to mark a politician as a man of the people. Former Governors "Gene" Talmadge, of Georgia, and Alfalfa Bill Murray, of Oklahoma, are among those who have used suspenders successfully for something besides holding up their pants. Candidates for office frequently swing still closer to earth and have their pictures taken when they are dressed in overalls and milking a cow or pitching hay. The candidate's publicity agents will also try to make the public think he likes to go fishing. President Coolidge is said to have worn white gloves and had his hook baited by a secret service agent when he fished, but he had to fish or endanger his political security. The candidate's diet may also be affected by the habits and interests of his constituents. If they dunk their corn pone, he should dunk his. If he is from Wisconsin, he should advertise his fondness for milk and butter and cheese. If he is from California, he should drink wine. If he is from Kansas, he had better not drink at all. In all of these matters he will keep a wary eye on the tastes of his constituents.

When the demagogue goes on a campaign for votes, he is generous with his promises. He will promise almost every class of voters something that they want. The promise of a five-cent fare was good for thousands of votes for many years in New York City. Promises of shared wealth or old-age pensions or jobs for the unemployed are exceedingly attractive during a depression. When Senator Bilbo was a candidate in 1934, he ran on a platform of twenty-seven points, advocating unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, payment of the soldiers' bonus, redistribution of wealth, and shorter hours and higher wages for laborers. One of his most original plans was to cover Mississippi with paved roads without any cost to the taxpayers. This was to be done by having Negro convicts build

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the roads with bricks that they had made from Mississippi clay. When the brick pavement became worn on the surface, the convicts were to turn the bricks over.

A similar generosity of promises is sometimes displayed by the small fry in the game of politics. In 1933, a candidate for mayor in Wisconsin distributed a handbill with his appeal to the voters stated as follows:

If you would like better Bus Service for Madison

If you would like better Taxi Service for Madison

If you want to vote for a man who is opposed to spending Thirty Thousand Dollars of the People's Money for the appraisal of the Madison Gas and Electric Company

If you want a man who will try and get employment for every unemployed man

If you want city business divided among taxpayers.

.
Then vote for "Tom" Quinn for Mayor!

Very often the demagogue does not desire the solution of problems that he has promised to deal with. As long as the issue remains open, the demagogue can use it as a means of attracting votes. Mayor Thompson of Chicago promised a reform of the traction condition in the city, but he never got it reformed. He continued to use the traction issue and his championship of the people's cause as bait for the voters until his final defeat. Mayor Hylan pursued a similar course in New York City. However, it is possible for the politician to carry such a policy too far. The people may get tired of waiting and seek a remedy from some other source. The demagogue who wants to build on the most solid foundation will do well to keep as many of his promises as he can, and if he solves a problem, find other issues with which to appeal to the electorate. The late Senator Huey Long was one of the ablest and most successful of modern American demagogues, and

when he was dictator of Louisiana he kept his promises. He said he would reduce illiteracy, and in ten years it was reduced 9.4 per cent. He promised better roads, and covered Louisiana with a network of paved roads. He improved the elementary schools and gave his state one of the best equipped universities in the far South. It was all done at great cost, but the people got something besides empty promises, and the Senator's hold on the state continued to grow stronger and stronger, until it reached the point where he could successfully withstand all the pressure that a patronage-dispensing national administration of his own party could turn against him. The moral is that the people can be fooled by empty promises for a while, but the safest way to retain the support of even relatively ignorant people is to avoid the assumption that they can be fooled indefinitely.

Organized groups constitute a part of the population whose support the politician seeks assiduously. Under normal circumstances, the support of organized voters is more valuable than unorganized support, and their opposition is considered much more dangerous. Since the World War, every demagogue in the United States has favored the cash payment of the soldiers' bonus. Senator Heflin illustrated the use that could be made of this issue when he told the Senate in March, 1927, "We have not provided for our soldier boys who were mistreated by the Republican Party. That party palmed off on them certain scrip or certificates in place of a cash bonus and when they presented those certificates at some of the banks, found they could get no money for them, but were forced to roam about the country trying to peddle them to somebody." When President Hoover in 1932, after long delay, finally ousted the members of the bonus army from their camp in Washington, politicians of the opposition were given material from which they could paint a lurid picture to their constituents, de-

scribing the way in which the country's former heroes had been gassed and driven from the capital city at the point of bayonets. After the Civil War, the politicians of the northern states were similarly solicitous of the veterans of the G. A. R. As a result, pensions grew by leaps and bounds. Organized labor constitutes another group that exerts a powerful influence in certain localities. Some legislators boast of the fact that their records are 100 per cent satisfactory to organized labor. At one time, the Ku Klux Klan was politically dominant in certain localities. In such localities its support was sought, and its doctrines broadcast by demagogues who considered election to office all important.

The politician who seeks support from organized groups will usually try to win as many groups, and alienate as few, as possible. Senator Cole Blease even had good words for such inimical organizations as the Catholic church and the Ku Klux Klan in 1926. He said in the Senate:

Something has been said to-day about the Catholics. I am not a Catholic, and I am not here to defend the Catholics or the Catholic religion. They need no defense. But they are a great denomination, and they are a great people and they have done a great deal for this country. If it had not been for the Catholics, and if it were not for the Catholics in the days to come, the Democratic party never would have had and never will have a President of the United States.

Then these Ku-Klux members. I do not belong to their organization either, but I know some parts of this country where they have done good. I know it to be a fact. While personally I am not a member of their organization, I have not any special objection to what they do or what they want to do.³

But the successful demagogue does not appeal to organized groups alone, for he knows that the unorganized elements in American politics are just as important and just as real. The

³ *Congressional Record*, 69th Congress, 1st Session, 2819.

appeal to racial elements is never neglected. In southern states, politicians play upon the prevalent conviction among the whites that Negroes must be made to "keep their place." Southern poor whites seem to be particularly susceptible to appeals to race prejudice. Former Senator Tom Heflin usually made "white supremacy" one of the main issues in his campaigns for election in Alabama. In 1930 he said, in explaining his opposition to Al Smith, "The idea of a Democrat from the South, a Democrat from Alabama, believing in the principles of white supremacy and white control, voting for a man who believes in social equality between niggers and whites! I would not vote for him."⁴ Senator Cole Blease, of South Carolina, went so far as to advocate openly that Negroes be lynched for certain offenses.⁵ In the Far West, politicians ride into office by fanning the local prejudice against Japanese and Chinese. In the South, the Negroes do not vote, and in the West the votes of the Orientals are so few as to be negligible. It is, therefore, safe in those regions to stir up prejudice openly against these politically powerless groups and to advocate measures that disregard their rights, in order to please the dominant group. The technique is to push down the helpless, in order to make other people think that they are being pulled up.

In sections of the country where racial elements are more evenly divided, the attempt to win votes is usually made by trying to flatter or to favor a particular group without alienating any other group. The Irish have shown an aptitude for politics that has given them political strength out of proportion to their numbers. They are, therefore, particularly cultivated by good politicians. The Germans constitute a racial element worthy of the most careful political attention in some localities. When politicians attack the British, as they not infrequently do, they

⁴ *Congressional Record*, 71st Congress, 2nd Session, 7409.

⁵ *New York Times*, July 20, 1930, III, 5.

usually have an eye on the German and the Irish vote. Italians, Poles, Scandinavians, and other groups are powerful elements in particular localities. Whether the political orator will extol the inestimable contributions to American greatness of Columbus, Vigo, Pulaski, Leif Ericsson, or Steuben depends upon the constituency that he is cultivating. Negroes, in the northern states, formerly regarded as the private preserve of the Republican party, are now among the groups most assiduously cultivated by both parties, particularly in states where they hold the balance of power.

In the period following the Civil War, appeals to the bitter passions developed by the war were very effective in the North. "Waving the bloody shirt" was good for votes until the end of the century. Oliver P. Morton told Indiana voters in 1866, "Every unregenerate rebel . . . calls himself a Democrat. . . . Every man who murdered Union prisoners . . . who contrived hellish schemes to introduce into Northern cities . . . yellow fever, calls himself a Democrat. Every dishonest contractor . . . every dishonest paymaster . . . every officer in the army who was dismissed for cowardice calls himself a Democrat." Mr. Morton was a very successful Indiana politician who was playing upon the emotions prevailing in his time among the people whose votes he wanted.

Ten years later, Robert G. Ingersoll was using the same appeal to win votes for the Republican ticket. In New York City he said, "Recollect that the men who starved our soldiers and shot them down are all for Tilden and Hendricks. All the hands dipped in Union blood were in the Democratic party." In Indianapolis, his appeal was even stronger: "Every man that endeavored to tear the old flag from the heaven it enriches was a Democrat. Every man that tried to destroy the Nation was a Democrat. . . . The man that assassinated Abraham Lincoln was a Democrat. . . . Every man that raised bloodhounds to

pursue human beings was a Democrat. . . . Soldiers, every scar you have on your heroic bodies was given you by a Democrat. Every scar, every arm that is missing, every limb that is gone is the souvenir of a Democrat."

The politician usually finds it politically profitable to be a "joiner." Membership in a wide variety of organizations brings him closer to a large number of voters and gives them a brotherly feeling for him. The Honorable Cole Blease set a commendable example in that regard. His biographical sketch in the *Congressional Directory* for 1929 concluded with the following: "Great sachem and great representative Improved Order of Red Men; grand master, grand patriarch, and grand representative of grand encampment and grand lodge to sovereign grand lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows; dictator Loyal Order of Moose, and representative to supreme lodge; past chancellor commander, Knights of Pythias; member Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and Woodmen of World; member Newberry and Richland County bar associations and of South Carolina State Bar Association and American Bar Association of the United States; married Miss Lillie Summers, of Anderson County, S. C.; both members of Methodist Church."

The demagogue should not confine himself to the acquisition of friends, but should strengthen his hold on his constituents by acquiring some enemies. It is to his advantage to attack what his constituents dislike or can readily be made to dislike. If possible, the injuries he inflicts should be mainly vocal injuries and leave few scars. The fundamental purpose is to inflame the passions of the people and create the impression that a fearless leader has arisen to champion their cause. Wall Street and the economic royalists are enemies that every good champion of the people attacks with might and main. In conservative districts, if the people are not too alert politically, the

communists may be fought with much profit. Newspapers sometimes make a good enemy, particularly if the candidate can create the impression that he is being persecuted by a press controlled by powerful and menacing interests. Former Senator Heflin, from Protestant and Ku Klux Klan territory, made the Catholic church his enemy and informed the public from time to time that his life had been threatened because of his policies. He also let the people know that he was continuing his heroic crusade to save America in spite of these threats to his personal safety. No arbitrary list of enemies can be compiled for the use of politicians. Enemies must be chosen according to the susceptibilities and prejudices of each locality. If possible, it may be best to let the enemy know that the attacks are the barking of a dog without teeth; then it is possible to have enemies without arousing their opposition. In 1933, the Honorable Huey Long delivered a great speech in Shreveport, Louisiana, attacking the rich and advocating a redistribution of wealth. He rode to Shreveport in the private railway car of Harvey and C. P. Couch, railroad and utility magnates. In all probability, these moneyed gentlemen did not worry about the Senator's crusade against their kind, or very strenuously oppose him.

Menaces, with which to arouse and perhaps frighten the voters, are standard equipment in the demagogue's bag of tricks. Communism is the most popular menace. Politicians in recent years seem to have gone on the theory, "When in doubt try communism." In other countries, this technique has proved highly successful. Mussolini rode into power in Italy to "save the country from communism." Hitler made communism one of the chief of the menaces from which he was to save Germany. In the United States, the technique has not proved so highly successful as in Italy and Germany, but it has been widely used and is still considered good unless overworked to the exclusion

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of other desirable tactics. In 1932, a Republican candidate for the United States Senate from Wisconsin ran on a platform that contained the following statements:

Bringing back the jobs and earning power of the people is the supreme need of the hour. This is vital to the welfare of the American home and family.

That goal can be reached most speedily by cutting out the cancer-like growth of communism which has sneaked crept into our American economic, moral, and religious order.

Persons elected to national and state offices can give the greatest immediate service to the people by stamping out from American life the disease of communism in all its undercover as well as its more open forms.

.

Strong leadership has never had a greater opportunity nor a higher moral obligation than to stem the drift toward communism, the greatest obstacle to recovery today.

.

I stand for the welfare of the American home and family; for honest social, economic, moral, and religious values and for the experience-tested governmental principles and ideals inscribed in our constitution and fought for by our heroic dead. In order to make plain just what I would work for to make it possible for our national and state governments to shake off the deadening communistic disease endangering these values and principles, I am outlining the following five fundamental objectives: 1. Wipe out communistic legislation and government experiments and thus kill fear for the future and release normal American energy to turn the wheels of American life

The author of this platform won the Republican nomination, but failed to win the election to the Senate. There were three reasons for his failure: (1) The people of Wisconsin were too intelligent politically to be caught by such an appeal. (2) They have had a long education in political principles under liberal leadership and are predominantly liberal. They are accord-

ingly more susceptible to appeals making use of what one writer calls Menaces of the Right than they are to appeals making use of Menaces of the Left.⁶ (3) He was the Republican candidate in 1932, a year in which very few Republicans managed to be elected to any office. His technique was weak in that his appeal was not properly adjusted to the intellectual level or the prejudices of the voters to whom he was appealing. It would have been an ideal platform for some localities. Of course the fact that this particular candidate was a Republican in a Democratic year was a matter of luck for which he was not to blame.

Menaces of the Right are generally popular among politicians who are professional champions of the interests of the common people. The moneyed interests, "malefactors of great wealth," the international bankers, munitions makers, the railroads, and public utilities may all be pictured as exerting a powerful and sinister influence on American political life. The demagogue promises to slay these dragons, but if he is elected he does very little slaying. In the first place, he probably would not know how to slay them if he wanted to, and in the second place, he does not take them seriously if they are as far away as Wall Street. He was merely shadow boxing in the campaign, and if they are powerful in his district, as the public utilities probably are, he fears their political power and tries to avoid arousing their antagonism.

In the latter part of his career as a United States Senator, the Honorable Tom Heflin used the Catholic church as one of his chief menaces. On April 22, 1930, he made a long speech in the United States Senate, which he said, at the beginning, was directed "principally to the Democrats of Alabama." In this appeal to his constituents, which was generally considered an

⁶ J. H. Wallis uses these terms in *The Politician*, 234, 235. Frederick A. Stokes Company.

appeal for re-election, he used three menaces and linked them all together. These menaces were, Tammany, Catholicism, and racial equality. In the course of his speech, he declared that Catholic leaders were "making a persistent, determined, and desperate effort to get the negro vote under the control of 'the Roman Catholic political machine,' and the first step is to get the negro in the Catholic Church. . . . The national leaders of the Roman Catholic group admit that they permit and indorse mixed parochial schools, where white children and negro children sit side by side in the same schoolroom, with both white and negro Catholic teachers." Further along in his speech he laid aside the appeal to race prejudice to accuse Catholic leaders of designs at political control of the American government, saying, "The Roman Catholic leaders admit right here in this American country of ours that they intend finally to set up a Roman Catholic government in the United States. . . ." And a little later, "Senators, what do you imagine this Senate will be 25 years from now if this un-American, intolerant, and bigoted political Roman program keeps up in the United States . . . if American Senators are to be marked for slaughter, as I have been, because in their efforts to serve their country and preserve free government in America they oppose the Roman Catholic plan and purpose in the United States? . . . Mr. President, one of the leading Catholics of the United States has said boastfully that the day will come when there will be no Member of Congress in either branch who does not have the O.K. of the Pope."⁷

The ability to denounce the enemy in language that appeals to the popular imagination is worth much in politics. The late Huey Long, most likeable and most brilliant of modern demagogues, was a master of invective. At one time, he referred to his opponents as "pie-eating sons of buzzards." On another

⁷ *Congressional Record*, 71st Congress, 2d Session, 7396-7410.

occasion, he explained his campaign for Senator Hattie Caraway's election in Arkansas by saying, "I went down there to get a bunch of pot-bellied politicians off that little woman's neck." He described General Johnson as, "The late and lamented, the pampered ex-crown prince, General Hugh S. Johnson, one of those satellites loaned by Wall Street to run the government. . . . this erstwhile prince of the deranged alphabet." Under the NRA, Senator Long said, "It would take forty lawyers to tell a shoe-shine stand how to operate and be certain he didn't go to jail." One of the newspaper men in Louisiana most active in opposition to the Long rule of the state attributed his success to his use of ridicule, along with patronage and "a shouting appeal to the mass emotions of the electorate."

Former Senator Heflin, although not so original or so clever as Senator Long, also knew how to refer to his enemies in strong language. On one occasion, in discussing an editorial about him that had appeared in a Washington newspaper, he said, "I have not been able to find out who it was that wrote it, but I have his picture in my mind. He is a despicable, irresponsible, worthless wretch. He is not a man in the true sense, but a miserable counterfeit of a man, made of nature's basest metals. He has no doubt mailed a copy of his coinspired attack on me to Doheny and he will watch the mails for a check as eagerly as Bill Nye's hungry hog watched for swill from the kitchen spout."

General Hugh Johnson, whose failure to win public sympathy illustrates the fact that the ability to abuse opponents is not in itself enough to insure political success, was generous in his use of bitter words. To him Huey Long and Father Coughlin were "Two Pied Pipers," who between them had "the whole bag of tricks ever possessed by any Mad Mullah or dancing dervish who ever incited a tribe or people through illusion

to its doom." Father Coughlin countered by referring to General Johnson as "a cracked gramophone record squawking the message of his master's voice," and as "the genial ghost, the kind chocolate soldier and the sweet prince of bombast." Other orators have warmed up politics by the happy invention of abusive terms as varied as the whole range of a politician's ingenuity. When the Honorable Gifford Pinchot campaigned for governor of Pennsylvania in 1930, he spoke of Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon as a "bootlegger." The Vire forces were described as "a crooked gang of political cut-throats." Former Senator Moses's description of the western Progressives as "sons of wild jackasses" was a clever expression, although it probably had little practical effect, except as it made the Progressives more progressive. The ability to denounce the enemy is a talent worthy of cultivation by the demagogue who would successfully ply his art. However, he should cultivate the kind of denunciation that wins the mass of people instead of the kind that simply embitters the opposition without winning anybody. In that respect, he would do well to follow Huey Long.

One of the most successful of the tested techniques of demagoguery is the device of diverting attention when attacked or when embarrassed by an issue. Of a distinguished middle western politician it was once said that if you asked him to state his position on the connection between crime and politics, he would say, "I am for America first." If you asked him why he had not improved the traction situation in his city, he was likely to shout, "Down with the League of Nations!" If you accused him of neglecting the interests of the common people to curry favor with millionaires, he would probably reply, "I shall refuse to sing God Save the King."⁸ Such answers were designed to distract attention by arousing popular emotions on

⁸ Peter Odegard, *The American Public Mind*, 162. By permission of Columbia University Press.

irrelevant subjects. When Huey Long, then governor of Louisiana, was about to be impeached, he toured the state, making speeches in which he spent much time discussing the needs of particular localities and promising to do what he could to grant the wishes of each locality—paving here, a school or a hospital or other improvements somewhere else. This appeal to self-interest was much more effective in winning support for him than reasoning about the merits of his case would have been. When Senator Cole Blease, of South Carolina, was opposing American entrance into the World Court in 1926, he called attention to the fact that Haiti had a voice in the selection of judges and said, "I call attention of Senators from the South . . . to the fact that they are voting for a court where we are to sit side by side with a full-blooded 'nigger,' who has as much right as we have in the election of the judges of this court. I ask them if they realize the fact that there may be and very probably will be a representative of Haiti as a judge on this court, so that the southern Senators are voting to throw the destinies of southern women and southern men into the lap of a black man."⁹ Such an appeal to the prejudice of his constituents would, in the case of some of them, make reasonable arguments in favor of the court as ineffective as water on a duck's back. Senator Bilbo, of Mississippi, resorted to similar tactics in 1937. When a group of college students in his native state petitioned him to support a federal anti-lynching law, he accused them of communism and demanded an investigation of possible communistic influences in the school.

Symbols are always good tools with which to arouse popular emotions. The demagogue uses the symbol as a mechanism with which to deflect criticism from himself and exploit the emotions of his constituents. If he is in the North or if he is addressing Negroes anywhere, he relies heavily upon the magic

⁹ *Congressional Record*, January 27, 1926, 69th Congress, 1st Session, 2819.

name of Abraham Lincoln. If he is a Southerner, he may make "white supremacy" his passport to success. Home and mother and the American flag are effective almost everywhere. He may manufacture his own symbols, such as "share the wealth," "every man a king," "social justice," "old age pensions." In any event, he gets hold of magic words that do something to human emotions and uses them to the limit.

It is always good strategy for the politician to associate himself with patriotism. Party gatherings usually meet in halls decorated with flags and bunting. Pictures of Washington and Lincoln or Jefferson and other statesmen who have been dead long enough to become sacred memories are prominently displayed upon the walls. The Star Spangled Banner or the Battle Hymn of the Republic is sung. The cause of the party becomes the cause of the country. The demagogue follows the same tactics in his own meetings. If he speaks whenever possible from a flag-draped platform in a Star Spangled Banner atmosphere with generous allusions to the flag and the heroic dead and the country's sacred institutions, he becomes in the minds of his hearers a patriotic institution himself. He finds it effective with some audiences to state in tones of deep conviction, as one senator did not long ago, "We can whip any country in the world. . . . I know we can do it, and if we cannot, then let us get an army and navy that can." The Constitution becomes the "greatest charter of liberties ever established by man," the United States "the greatest country that the sun ever shone upon." Patriotism covers a multitude of sins, and in the excitement that it brings to the minds of men, the demagogue can steal away with a multitude of votes.

Ranking with the appeal to patriotic emotions is the appeal of the home and the family. The political spellbinder always stands for the sacredness of the American home. If he can

capitalize on his own home and advertise the orthodoxy of his family relationships, he can make a strong appeal to the average citizen. For the best effect, the politician's wife should be a good wholesome woman, at least from a photographic standpoint, and she should not be in high society. When one of the recent former Presidents was a candidate for re-election, and on vacation, the publicity men had his wife poke her head out the window, as the chief of the secret service started for town in his car, and call to him telling him not to forget to bring two pounds of green beans for dinner. Such stunts perhaps presume a little on the intelligence of the electorate, but they will arouse a favorable reaction in the minds of a great many voters if they are not too obviously overdone. Children may also be capitalized upon. A large family is a decided asset to a politician. If he has no children of his own, the publicity agents may build up his interest in other children. The politician does not actually kiss the quantities of babies that are proverbially so anointed, but he does sense the universal appeal of childhood and makes use of it as often as possible.

Publicity is life blood to the demagogue's career. He should keep himself before the public as though he were a well-advertised cigarette. Favorable publicity is best, but unfavorable publicity is better than none at all. Silence will kill him. The late Huey Long was a master of the art of getting publicity. At one time, he would advise the women to eat turnip greens for their complexions; at another, he would greet a foreign diplomat or the gentlemen of the press in his pajamas (very loud pajamas); at still another time, he would call out the militia; and at frequent intervals he made the headlines by a cleverly original scathing attack upon a political opponent or some institution of general interest. He had a sense of the dramatic and an almost intuitive knowledge of how to say what

would appeal to the popular imagination and get his name in the papers. In that respect, as in some others, he was almost a model demagogue.

The wise politician will study his own locality and adjust his appeal to the emotions and prejudices and intellectual capacity of the people in that territory. He should not be led astray by the thought that he may become President. The chances are against him; and if he angles for the Presidency, he is likely to try to win support away from home by saying and doing things that will alienate his own constituents. A sure hold on a congressional district or a state is more lucrative than gambling for the President's job. The safest and most effective policy is for him to specialize on a limited area and nurse it as he would a sick lamb. The Southerner who stresses "white supremacy" and opposes national legislation against lynching is strengthening his hold upon the people who will keep him in office. The northern politician who advocates equal rights for Negroes nauseates the South, but he wins the voters that mean the most to him. Western agrarians who excoriate Wall Street and the "interests" every campaign year, urban politicians who cater to organized labor, Easterners who blame the country's ills on the "sons of wild jackasses" who perennially roam in the wide spaces of the West—all are making an appeal effective in their own regions. In another region it might be as welcome as a worm in the breakfast bowl of cereal, but what other constituencies think doesn't matter. Keeping on the payroll is what counts.

The characteristics of demagogues vary as their personalities vary, but the characteristics that have been mentioned are common to the species. The technique employed may vary in details, but certain principles have proved their worth and have come to be generally recognized as good guides to successful demagoguery, provided the time is ripe and the people susceptible to demagogic leadership.

Whether the master of the demagogue's technique will succeed or not depends largely upon economic conditions and the intelligence of the people. They flourish most when conditions are abnormal and times are hard. When the poor resent the domination of the rich and begin to stir about in protest against existing conditions, they are likely to fall prey to the facile promises of the demagogue. The atmosphere of the class struggle, with its attendant resentments and attempts at drastic change, is fertile ground for demagogues. One of the constituents of a southern rabble rouser is supposed to have said that the Senator didn't do "a durn thing" for the poor people, but he at least promised them something, which was more than anyone else did. A vote for him was the poor man's method of protesting against the existing system and the powers in control. When enough poor people grow resentful, the demagogue is likely to be elected. If his promises prove too empty, his constituents will finally become disillusioned and forsake him for some other leader; but they follow him for a time in the hope that he will better conditions that badly need bettering. Establish economic security and a reasonable distribution of wealth and demagogues would become as obsolete as dinosaurs.

Along with bad economic conditions, popular ignorance furnishes the nurture that keeps demagogues in existence. Rabble rousers have been most successful in those parts of the United States where the illiteracy rates are highest. Their spectacular successes in Europe have been in countries where the people were unused to self-government, and when such people were subjected to unusually bad economic conditions. The various leagues and unions that sprang up in the United States when demagogues were organizing support for themselves made their chief appeal to the poor and the politically unsophisticated. Demagoguery essentially consists of false promises and appeals to the emotions, the transparency of which

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should be obvious to intelligent people. Demagogues thrive on unintelligent constituencies as buzzards thrive on dead oxen. They appear when a society is sick economically and intellectually.

XII

PRESSURE GROUPS

IN 1919, the legions of the Demon Rum were routed, and the eighteenth amendment established prohibition as a part of the American Constitution. In 1933, after facing odds that seemed insurmountable even to some of their own field marshals, the myrmidons of the Demon had returned to power. The change illustrated the fickleness of the public mind, or that the public is open minded, or that a majority may pass laws or repeal them without making up the public mind. Probably most of all it illustrated the power of organized groups to influence the action of the state.

The organized forces that brought in national prohibition and ushered it out were only a few of the many that are constantly generating pressure to get what they want from the representatives of the people whose function is supposedly to give expression to the public will. In 1924, a United States Senator wrote: "There are lobbyists for the sugar interests, for the steel interests, for the wool interests, for the tobacco interests, for the fertilizer interests, for the cotton manufacturers' interests, for prohibition and anti-prohibition, for postal employees, for labor organizations, for railroads, for civil-service employees, for the equal rights of women, for the bonus, for those opposed to the bonus, for the Mellon plan of tax reduction, for the farmers' organizations, for the shipping interests, for Henry Ford's acquisition of Muscle Shoals, for the water-power trust, for the packers, for the oil interests, for the disabled ex-service men, for the manufacturers, for the Army, for the

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Navy, for national aid to education, and many other special interests. Washington is honeycombed with lobbyists; the hotels are full of them."¹

In the midst of this maelstrom of conflicting forces, the elected representatives of the people must make decisions affecting the common welfare, and seek to interpret the wishes of their constituents. It is no wonder that the voice of the general public is sometimes a still small voice that may easily be lost in the din of special interests. Those who would make themselves heard must combine in self-defense and shout with an organized voice. So lobbies beget lobbies, and the race for political recognition goes merrily on.

Pressure groups are likely to develop and make their influence felt whenever any branch of the government has the power to make decisions affecting the interests of groups of people, but they are usually most concerned with the work of legislatures. Every legislative body has wide power to affect the interest of individuals either favorably or unfavorably. For instance, tariff bills that protect certain industries and leave others unprotected, bills regulating the manufacture or sale of certain articles, bills granting franchises, or providing for the expenditure of considerable sums of money, are likely to be of important concern to groups of individuals capable of exerting considerable influence if they are organized. When such bills are being considered by a legislature, both the advocates and the opponents will naturally seek to present their views and try to enforce them upon the legislators.

Powerful pressure groups are more numerous and lobbyists are more prolific in our time than they have ever been before, but they are not peculiar to this period. More than a hundred years ago, Roger B. Taney, fighting lieutenant of Andrew Jack-

¹ Senator Kenneth McKellar, *Congressional Record*, 68th Congress, 1st Session, 5798. Reprinted from *The New York Times*, March 9, 1924.

son, criticized the political activities of the Bank of the United States and said in a speech to his Maryland neighbors, "It was obvious to my mind . . . that a great moneyed corporation possessing a fearful power for good or for evil, had entered into the field of political warfare, and was deliberately preparing its plans to obtain, by means of its money, an irresistible political influence in the affairs of the nation, so as to enable it to control the measures of the Government."² The Jacksonians knew what it was to face a powerful lobby bent on protecting its own interests by the use of every means that financial power could command. A further illustration of early lobbying activity may be found in the work of the United States Brewers' Association. This organization, which proclaimed its patriotism and its readiness to sacrifice self interest, was formed in 1862 when Congress levied a tax of one dollar per barrel on beer. Less than a year later, after a period of almost daily correspondence with government officials, the patriotic brewers succeeded in getting the tax reduced to sixty cents a barrel. Soon after the Civil War had ended, the Federal Excise Tax Law was revised, and the brewers played an influential part in the revisions. Congressmen of today may thus derive what consolation may be found in the fact that their predecessors of a hundred years ago were not left to interpret the public will without "assistance" from the gentlemen with axes to grind.

To the student of popular government, the power of the pressure groups is the most significant feature of their existence. In a political system designed to reflect the popular will by representation based on geographical population units, and without any adequate recognition of the modern need for representation of economic interests, an extra legal system has grown up that allows pressure groups to exercise control over the government in proportion to their financial resources, their

² Samuel Tyler, *Memoir of Roger Brooke Taney*, 227, 228. John Murphy Company.

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ability to control valuable blocs of votes, or the skill of their lobbyists. There are times when investigations reveal that not only are the policies of the government shaped by the power of pressure groups, but even the personnel of governmental agencies is in some cases determined by these representatives of special interests.

The control of committees is of strategic importance to any group seeking to influence legislation in the Congress of the United States or in the state legislatures, because practically all business in these bodies goes before committees. Any bill that is not reported out favorably by the committee has scant chance of being passed. Accordingly, when a bill is introduced, the lobbyists make their first attack upon the committee to which it is referred. But before the bill is introduced, the more powerful lobbies of long standing try to see that men favorable to their cause are put on the committee. A favorable committee is almost a guarantee of favorable legislation.

Considerable evidence exists to indicate that the pressure groups are not infrequently successful in controlling the membership of congressional committees in which they are interested. Among those thus successful have been the munitions lobbyists, as indicated by a letter written in 1928 to the president of a boat-building corporation. The report of the lobbyist was as follows:

Dear Mr. Carse: Successfully managed campaign for candidate Rules Committee, which is most important to us, when any legislation is up.

.

"Candidates successfully elected to Rules Committee:

Honorable Jos. W. Martin, Jr., Mass.

Honorable Frank Fort, New Jersey.

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"The Rules Committee is the most important committee in Congress. It absolutely controls legislation."³

In 1913, a congressional investigation of lobbying activities revealed that the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Federation of Labor had both been influential in securing the appointment of desired members to committees. The American Federation of Labor was particularly interested in the personnel of the House Committee on Labor, and used its influence to secure the appointment of a favorable member as chairman of that committee during at least three congresses. All of the members that they indorsed for the chairmanship were appointed. The National Association of Manufacturers showed an interest in the composition of both the Labor Committee and the Judiciary Committee, and was at times successful in influencing appointments.

The National Association of Manufacturers did not content itself with efforts to secure the appointment of favorably disposed members to the committees. In order to be sure that they kept in close touch with what was going on, the Association's lobbyists made special arrangements with House employees. The Chief Page of the House was in their pay from 1909 to 1912, and working arrangements existed with other employees. By this means, public documents were secured and advance information on the status of bills and proposed action on them was obtained, as well as added ease of access to members on the floor and preference in obtaining interviews.⁴

Illustrations of the power of pressure groups are not to be found only in their influence on committees and employees of Congress. These groups representing special interests have significantly affected international relations. They have been

³ *Munitions Industry*, 73rd Congress, Part 1, 287.

⁴ Edward B. Logan, "Lobbying," Supplement to *The Annals*, Vol. CXLIV, 10, 11.

helped by friendly administrative officials and have threatened unfriendly ones. They have at times controlled Congress and overridden Presidential vetoes. There are occasions when they seem either to defy or paralyze public opinion, whereas at other times they seek to control it.

Mr. William B. Shearer, lobbyist extraordinary for the munitions interests, was generally blamed for the collapse of the Coolidge disarmament conference in 1927. That Mr. Shearer himself claimed the credit for the beneficial results accruing to the ship builders from the sabotage of the conference is indicated by a letter which he wrote to an official of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company in 1928, in which he said:

Pursuant to our . . . understanding . . . that future negotiations would be with me direct, I wish to call to your attention that as the result of my activities during the Sixty-ninth Congress, eight 10,000-ton cruisers are now under construction.

Further, that owing to the failure of the tripower naval conference at Geneva, there is now before the Seventieth Congress a 71-ship building program costing \$740,000,000.

The understanding for which expenses were furnished me to conduct the campaign for naval preparedness was to March 5, 1928, to be paid as a salary of \$25,000 a year, receipt hereby acknowledged for year ending March 4, 1928.⁵

Mr. Shearer's activities covered a wider range than do those of most lobbyists, and he seems to have been equally influential as a lobbyist among the diplomats and as a lobbyist in congressional circles. The munitions makers never neglected Congress, and Mr. Shearer was not the only agent who was engaged to protect their interests in Washington, nor was he the only one to be successful in his efforts. An agent of the Electric Boat Company wrote exultantly to the company's president in March, 1929, "all of our legislative efforts have borne fruit."

⁵ *Munitions Industry*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 20, 5547.

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More specifically, he reported, "The Cruiser bill is passed, the submarine appropriations have been passed, and . . . we did manage . . . to get the second deficiency bill through . . . and we expect to receive payment at two o'clock this afternoon or early tomorrow morning."⁶

That this lobby had powerful friends among the administrative officials of the government is indicated by the agent's statement that members of the Navy Department had congratulated him both in writing and personally. He indicated his desire to report verbally in more detail on the methods used and the help received in getting his measure through Congress, and explained, "My reason for not putting this in writing is out of respect for those who helped, and who were so powerful and so friendly."

The Hearings of the Senate Committee that investigated the munitions industry revealed numerous other instances of the power and influence of the munitions lobby in administrative circles. The president of one of the leading ordnance companies wrote in 1929 that the War Department was co-operating with them "100 per cent." Officials of the Ordnance Department, he said, had informed the company's agents that they were more concerned with having the company's plant get work than having it go to the government plants.⁷ In 1933, one of the Admirals of the United States Navy took a different attitude and condemned the excess profits made by the shipbuilders; with the suggestion that he would favor government construction of ships if they did not reduce the cost of construction. This was reported indignantly by a legislative agent of one of the companies, who also expressed the opinion that Mr. Bardo, president of his company, should "hold high converse" with the admiral on the subject. He thought Mr. Bardo could

⁶ *Munitions Industry*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 1, 289.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Part 2, 522.

present matters in a way that would "make him see daylight."⁸

In 1933, the New York Shipbuilding Company, through its agents, approached the State Department with an inquiry as to whether or not the Department would object to their submitting bids for the construction of war craft for the Brazilian navy. Officials of the Department informed them that there was no law against such action, but they would regret any move on the part of Brazil that might lead to a naval race in South America. The company then proceeded with its plans. In order to further their cause, they tried to get the United States Government to send a warship on a "shake-down cruise" to Brazil to serve as a salesman's sample. The vice-president of the company approached the American Ambassador to Brazil with the suggestion. The Ambassador reported to the State Department, March 12, 1934, "His manner was rather truculent and he took me to task for not being there when he wanted to see me." When the Ambassador did not warm to his suggestion, the shipbuilder threatened "that he would take the matter up with the Navy through his own channels—to have a cruiser available for detached service sent to Rio." The Ambassador's recommendation to the State Department was that no cruiser be sent, in view of the effect that such action might have on the already "unsettled political situation." The State Department expressed its approval of this viewpoint. In August, the company's president again took up the matter with the Navy Department and requested that a cruiser be sent. On August 18, the Chief of Naval Operations informed him that two war vessels had been scheduled to visit Rio de Janeiro, one in August and one in November.⁹

When these facts were brought to light by the Senate's investigating committee, the president of the company was asked if

⁸ *Munitions Industry*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 20, 5628.

⁹ *Munitions Industry*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 19, 5062-72, 5229.

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he had been told of the conversation of his agent with the American Ambassador. He said that he could not remember whether he had been told or not. Then the following conversation took place:

SENATOR CLARK. Would that be the kind of detail you would be apt to forget, the matter of one of your agents undertaking to put pressure on an American Ambassador?

MR. BARDO. I would not attach very much importance to it.

SENATOR CLARK. That is all in the day's work, is it?

MR. BARDO. That is all in the day's work.¹⁰

Another pressure group that has demonstrated its power to influence the acts of the government is composed of the veterans' organizations. The Legislative Committee of the American Legion reported to the National Convention of 1936:

"Your committee . . . gave first consideration to legislation providing for immediate payment of the adjusted compensation certificates. The Legislation conforming to the mandate of the St. Louis Convention was successfully passed over the President's veto in record-breaking time." This report on the victorious conclusion of their campaign for a cash bonus from the national government brought to a close a battle of several years duration, during which they had to go against the disapproval of four Presidents and a powerful section of public opinion.

In 1927, the Legislative Committee's report on its achievements in Congress revealed its power at that time in this pregnant sentence: "The Legion alone was responsible for the enactment into law of many of these measures, having drawn the legislation, obtained its introduction, aided in its progress in committees by testimony and legislative effort, and finally prevailed upon the House and Senate to take favorable action in time for approval by the President."

The American Legion's lobbying organization costs it ap-

¹⁰ Munitions Industry, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 19, 5067.

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proximately twenty-five thousand dollars a year, but it is a profitable investment. With the co-operation of other veteran's groups, it has forced four major bills through Congress over the vetoes of as many Presidents. It is doubtful if any other organization can boast of an equal record. One writer has suggested that the Legion's capture of Congress was almost complete by 1925. Their legislative agent had established his power to the extent that he could walk through the Capitol halls like a commander and command the attention of individual congressmen at his will. Any congressman who said no to him would hear from the ex-soldiers in the home district within twenty-four hours.¹¹

Certainly it is true that the veterans' lobby has commanded the fearful respect of the representatives of the sovereign people, and there is a general feeling that they have not only been able to get what they demanded in the past, but that they will get what they demand in the future.

Several years ago, the Anti-Saloon League was a pressure group with enough power to make many wet congressmen vote dry in order to hold their jobs. The Anti-Saloon League worked through the organized Protestant churches, and because of that connection was able to exert a powerful influence in every locality. The League was a non-partisan organization that was able to hold the balance of power and force the major parties to nominate candidates acceptable to it or face defeat. The League's ability to elect its friends and defeat its enemies, demonstrated time after time, served as a constant warning not only to the party leaders but also to office holders who aspired to continue in the public service for more than one term. Eventually the eighteenth amendment was the result.

The Anti-Saloon League began as an organization working

¹¹ Roger Burlingame, "Embattled Veterans," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLII (1933), 393.

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for the development of public sentiment in favor of temperance, for the enforcement of laws on the statute books, and for the enactment of further legislation "in order that our people may be saved from the evils of the drink habit and delivered from the debauching curse of the drink traffic."¹² In the early days, the Anti-Saloon League worked for local option laws and later for state-wide prohibition laws. Then they moved on Congress. The League saw very early that state prohibition would not be wholly successful as long as liquor could be shipped into the dry states under the protection of the commerce clause of the Constitution. After several attempts to secure satisfactory legislation had failed, the Webb-Kenyon bill was passed in 1913, over the veto of President Taft. One of the spokesmen for the United States Brewers' Association called attention to "the impressive fact" that Congress had passed the bill by more than a two-thirds majority "in the face of the united effort of all branches of the alcoholic liquor traffic."¹³ Significantly, he measured the power of the pressure group that he opposed in terms of its ability to defeat one of the pressure groups that had until then been powerful enough to get what it wanted in most matters.

The climax of the Anti-Saloon League work was the successful movement for national prohibition. Victory came in the election of 1916, with the election of a Congress favorable to the submission of a prohibition amendment. Wayne B. Wheeler, the dry generalissimo, said of the campaign that year, "We laid down such a barrage as candidates for Congress had never seen before, and such as they will, in all likelihood, not see again for years to come." And on election night, when the returns came in, the staff in the League headquarters knew that

¹² E. H. Cherrington, quoted in Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 4. By permission of Columbia University Press.

¹³ Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 146. Columbia University Press.

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they had won. In 1917, the Eighteenth Amendment was submitted to the states, and in only slightly more than a year's time it had been ratified by the necessary thirty-six states. By 1922, forty-six states had fallen into line.

In working for national prohibition, the Anti-Saloon League developed strength because it was the organized expression of a powerful element in public opinion. Opposition to the liquor traffic was a force of gradual growth, and it represented a conviction widespread among the people, particularly those of the churches. The Anti-Saloon League became the organization through which this force could make itself effective. Its power in politics grew out of the fact that it acted for a large section of the voting public, and it acted under the direction of leaders who knew how to use its power with the maximum advantage.

Other pressure groups are constantly influencing the policies and procedure of the government, sometimes without attracting popular attention, sometimes in the full light of publicity. Philippine independence was favored in 1932 by the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers' Union, the National Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation, the National Dairy Union, the National Beet Growers' Association, cotton-seed crushers' associations, representatives of the sugar cane growers, and the American Federation of Labor. The result was the passage of an independence bill over President Hoover's veto in 1933. When that bill proved unacceptable to the Philippine legislature, a similar bill was passed in 1934 and accepted by the Filipinos. Some groups are more powerful at one time than at another. In the 1890's, the farmers were not able to make much of an impression on the national congress. In more recent years they have developed a lobbying organization through which they have wielded a powerful influence on legislation. Since 1933, when they have been able to unite on a program, they have been given what they asked for.

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In 1930, the power of organized labor and of organized Negro groups was demonstrated when these organizations caused the Senate to reject the appointment by President Hoover of Judge John J. Parker to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Judge Parker was approved by an imposing list of endorsers, including two United States Circuit Judges, ten United States District Judges, many state judges, the president of the American Bar Association and five former presidents, numerous presidents of state and county bar associations, hundreds of lawyers, and other prominent citizens. But the American Federation of Labor greeted his nomination with the announcement that they would fight confirmation "on the ground that, in his decisions as a member of the Fourth Circuit, Judge Parker exhibited hostility to organized labor." Negro groups opposed him because he held views toward their race that they considered disparaging. Before long, President Hoover was informed by administration spokesmen in the Senate that opposition to Judge Parker's nomination was growing among Republican Senators, particularly among those representing states having a large Negro population. The suggestion was also made to the President that he might ease the situation either by withdrawing the nomination or by getting from Parker a denial that he had ever made the derogatory remarks about Negroes that had been attributed to him. President Hoover refused to withdraw the nomination, and the Senate then rejected the appointment. The Senate's action was partially a result of the desire of a number of Senators that the vacancy on the Court be filled by a liberal, but more than that it was a demonstration of the power of organized groups, in this case union labor and Negro associations, to exercise a powerful influence over Senators in the exercise of their duty of passing upon Presidential selections of members of the Supreme Court.

Testimonials to the power of pressure groups are woven into

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the framework of our political organization and written into the statutes and the treaties of the country. A congressman describing the fate of a bill to strengthen the pure food and drug laws gave an illustration of what lobbyists can do to laws when he said: "Then the lobbyists began their work. First one clause was lopped off; then another; then one joker inserted; then weasel words added wherever they would do the most harm. Then various Senators began to offer amendments. The process is like amending a machine gun. First you distort the sight, then you provide it can only be fired on Sundays, and finally you fill it with powderless bullets. That is how they amended the pure food and drug bill."¹⁴ Certain members of Congress owe their seats to the support of pressure groups. Certain ex-members are absent because of the hostility of such groups. International relations and battleship contracts have been significantly influenced by lobbyists. The adoption of national prohibition, the repeal of prohibition, the soldiers' bonus, Philippine independence, farm legislation, labor legislation, and Judge Parker's absence from the Supreme Court—all testify to the power of organization and pressure.

The methods used by pressure groups to attain their ends vary from time to time and under different circumstances. The lower the standards of morality, the coarser have been the methods used by those seeking favorable legislation. In Andrew Jackson's day the Bank of the United States loaned money to needy congressmen. Daniel Webster, one of its staunchest champions in the United States Senate, was on its payroll as an attorney. In the 1860's and 1870's, lobbyists not infrequently bought the votes of legislators by the direct use of money, railroad passes, and "other things of value." Since that time the

¹⁴ Representative John M. Coffee, *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 75th Congress, 1st Session, August 12, 1937, 11283.

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technique has been refined and methods diversified. Outright bribery is no longer common, but money is still effective in influencing the actions of government officials.

Some lobbyists represent pressure groups with large memberships. Others work for interests with large financial resources but small membership. The methods used to influence the government differ decidedly according to the size of the membership of the pressure group. Where the membership is large, the group's leaders and its lobbyists may powerfully influence legislation by working almost wholly with their own group. In elections, they may notify their members that a candidate is favorable or unfavorable, and, if they hold the balance of power, bring about his election or his defeat. When Congress or the state legislature convenes, the mere threat of an organization with a large membership has a strong influence on legislators. If they need to be reminded of the membership's existence and its wishes, the lobbyist can bring down upon them a barrage of letters and telegrams. To legislative ears, the voice of the organized seems much louder than the voice of the unorganized. Such organizations may rely wholly upon the political strength of their own membership and make no great effort to win the support of the general public for the measures they favor.

An organization or a group without a large membership must rely upon money and publicity to give it power. Sometimes it can get what it wants by securing the support of political bosses who control the legislators. This is particularly true in state politics. Contributions to campaign funds may also be made as an investment, and usually the investor is not disappointed. If necessary, a great campaign of propaganda may be launched to win public opinion to the side of the pressure group. Where a genuine public sympathy cannot be

created, money and business pressure may win the support of newspapers and bring about the sending of enough letters and telegrams to give the appearance of a public opinion.

Although the special interests no longer rely so completely upon work done by lobbyists at the capitol as they once did, such lobbyists, or legislative agents, as they are sometimes called, are still a vital necessity in any program for winning favorable legislation. As a result, the lobbyists in Washington are several times more numerous than congressmen, considerably better paid than congressmen, and on the average they are abler men. A similar situation exists in many state capitals. These lobbyists are alert and informed men, masters of legislative strategy who generally know much more about the business of the legislature than its own members do. They are professionals whose services are available to those with money enough to pay them. Sometimes such an agent may represent more than one employer. Senatorial investigation of utility lobbying in 1936 revealed that one lobbyist was working for the utilities and the Veterans of Foreign Wars at the same time.¹⁵ As a lawyer is hired by his client to get a little more than justice from the court, legislative agents are hired to get all they can from the people's representatives in the legislature.

The lobbyist sees that desired bills are introduced and keeps a close watch on their progress in committee and on the floor. Bills have a way of dying in committee unless pressure is applied to get them out. The lobbyist also arranges for hearings on his bill, in order that it will receive impressive support. Before the bill comes up, he has probably done what he could to influence assignment of members to committees that handle legislation in which he is interested. Pressure will be exerted on members at the proper time. Of course, lobbyists do not wait until a bill is before the legislature to begin cultivating

¹⁵ *New York Times*, March 7, 1936.

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legislators. They have social and other contacts with them and with other government officials all the time. The methods used are illustrated by the report of a munitions lobbyist on the use of a launch owned by his employers. He wrote in August 1928:

Today the Turkish Ambassador is to use it. Tomorrow the acting Japanese Ambassador has arranged to use it. Probably on Sunday Admiral Hughes . . . will use it. Monday I am inclined to believe some of the Shipping Board are using it, Commissioners, I mean. Friday to Saturday will be given over to painting it up. On Saturday, some of the Hoover people will use it for two days—meaning Saturday and Sunday next week if clear. This party will cover several members of Congress of importance.¹⁶

An investigation of the New York insurance companies in 1906 revealed the methods used in their large scale lobbying activities. The three big New York companies involved divided the country into three districts in order to watch legislation in all the states most effectively and economically. Each company took the responsibility for watching legislation in one district. At least one legislative agent was stationed at each capitol. The names of these agents were kept secret. They made arrangements with clerks of committees to get information regarding bills, suppressed movements in advance, secured pledges from legislators, and used newspapers as mediums of propaganda. In New York state, the companies won the support of Boss Platt by paying him substantial sums of money. The Mutual Life Insurance Company also maintained a house at Albany where two members of the Insurance Committee of the Senate lived while the legislature was in session, apparently free of charge, and where other legislators were entertained from time to time.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Munitions Industry*, Part 1, 295.

¹⁷ Edward B. Logan, "Lobbying," Supplement to *The Annals*, Vol. CLXIV (1929), 4, 5.

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In pre-Volstead days, the brewery interests saw the hand-writing on the wall and brought great pressure to bear on legislators to prevent, if possible, the catastrophe that threatened them. Their methods are illustrated by the practices revealed in an investigation of the political activities of Texas brewers. In 1903, the brewers agreed to assess themselves to establish a fund to promote "anti-prohibition matters in Texas." By 1908, they were not only contributing money themselves for the fight on prohibition, but also assessing dealers and manufacturers who sold goods to them. Some of the money was spent to influence public opinion, but a considerable portion was spent to influence the legislature directly. Large sums were spent on entertainments for legislators, combinations and arrangements were effected for the passage of favorable bills, and complete records were kept of the actions of legislators. Lobbyists were instructed to do what was necessary "regardless of the expense." This sometimes meant the direct payment of money to legislators. Those who owned newspapers received checks for advertising. Some of the work had "to be done very quietly," and not all officials were for sale, but, as one brewers' agent said, "there are more ways than one of choking a cat." However, in Texas at least, the money way seemed to be strongly relied on in that period.¹⁸

More recently, pressure groups have come to place increased reliance upon propaganda designed to influence public opinion. In fact, most of the propaganda that floods the country, aside from commercial advertising, has for its purpose influencing the actions of the government. Whether or not such propaganda actually creates public opinion, it may certainly, as one lobbyist said, "accelerate" it. Large sums of money are spent on the acceleration, or creation, of opinion, because lobbyists assume now that public opinion is supreme in the United States,

¹⁸ Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 249-55. By permission of Columbia University Press.

and the best way to control the government is to control public opinion. They seek to mold the opinions of the electorate, in order that favorable legislators will be elected and the opinion of their constituents will keep them going in the right direction after they are elected.

As one writer has aptly said, "The conscience of Congress is peculiarly responsive to large numbers."¹⁹ When a pressure group has a large and homogeneous membership, such as the veterans' organizations or the labor organizations have, it may rely upon its own members to furnish the large numbers that are necessary to catch the ears of the people's servants and get the quickest response from their collective conscience. Organizations without large numbers in their own ranks must recruit supporters from the general public. To that end, they resort to propaganda, usually trying to create the impression that their cause is closely linked with the public interest. For instance, if a high tariff will increase their dividends, they sell the public the idea that a high tariff means high wages for American workers, more industry, more jobs, and greater general prosperity. Lobbyists do not depend on the pressure which they themselves can apply to legislators as much as they did in less advanced times. They try to make legislators think that the public wants what the pressure group wants. Instead of going after the legislator, they get his constituents to go after him. If a genuine public opinion cannot be created or accelerated, they create a simulated opinion that may fool the legislator. In any case, the theory is that the way to influence the public servant is to persuade the sovereign people to voice the demands of the special interest.

The methods used by the dry forces working for prohibition and the wet forces that opposed them illustrate many of the points of effective technique in the appeal of pressure groups to

¹⁹ Lewis Jefferson Corbin, Jr., *Patriotism Prepaid*, 40. J. B. Lippincott Company.

the public. One of the Anti-Saloon League's leading strategists said in 1911 that the choosing of issues, the introduction of bills, lobbying before the legislature, while important activities, were only incidents in the campaign. "Back of all such endeavor," he said, "there must be a nation-wide movement of public opinion, voicing itself in a way that will be heard by every Congressman. Petitions are important if presented in sufficient volume; personal communications to members are still more effective, personal interviews are best of all, where the citizen can come face to face with his member and . . . make known his wishes for legislation as a true American sovereign. . . . The surest way to secure needed temperance legislation is for the sovereign voters, through well planned organization, to elect men as their representatives . . . who will write the laws upon the statute books."²⁰

Meanwhile, the enemy was equally active, although the methods used varied somewhat. A committee of the United States Senate reported in 1919 that the liquor interests had furnished "large sums of money for the purpose of secretly controlling newspapers and periodicals," spent large sums of money in primaries and elections, made extensive use of the boycott to compel the support of other business concerns, and had organized clubs and leagues of various kinds in order to carry on secretly their political and propaganda activities.²¹ The abuses of the liquor traffic had given it a bad reputation that made open political activities less likely to succeed than camouflaged ones. While the Anti-Saloon League was organizing and mobilizing a widespread sentiment that had been growing for years as a result of years of temperance agitation against the evils of alcohol, the wets were fighting this public

²⁰ Quoted from *Proceedings* of the Fourteenth Convention of the Anti-Saloon League, 1911, by Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 127, 128. By permission of Columbia University Press.

²¹ Senate Document 62, 66th Congress, 1st Session, 1919, Vol. 1, 1385.

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opinion and seeking to divert it. Accordingly, they sometimes tried to veil their activities by masquerading under such names as, Civic Liberty Leagues, Manufacturing and Business Associations, Manufacturers and Dealers Clubs, and Liberty Leagues.²²

The Anti-Saloon League and other dry organizations gave organized expression to the sentiment of the Protestant churches of the United States and worked through them. Since there was at least one Protestant church in practically every community of any size in the United States, the means existed by which every part of the country could be reached effectively. The power of the drys usually corresponded to the influence of the churches, which is one of the most powerful forces that exists in the average American community. The liquor interests at the same time made use of the saloons as political centers for agitation against temperance legislation. In some of the large cities, saloon keepers came to occupy a dominant position in politics. However, in the country as a whole, the churches proved to be more effective as local propaganda agencies than the saloons, and their membership proved to be more powerful in politics than the followers of the saloon.

The propaganda methods of the dry organizations were particularly effective. They made use of both educational and emotional appeals. The importance of influencing the minds of children was fully realized, and organized efforts were made to teach them to fear and hate the effects of alcohol. The Anti-Saloon League favored compulsory instruction in scientific temperance in the public schools. A tremendous amount of literature for children, some of it in the form of plays, poems, and stories, was published and distributed through the Sunday schools, public schools, and other agencies. Children, some of whom had never seen a drunken man, were taught to sing such songs as:

²² Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 266. By permission of Columbia University Press.

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Down with booze!
Down with booze!
We want groceries,
And we want shoes.

The parents of the children were not neglected, of course. Propaganda of various kinds designed to convince them of the evils of the liquor traffic was spread about through various agencies. The League stressed the dangers to their children by telling how the lives of young people were ruined and asserting that the liquor dealers were constantly making special efforts to create the appetite for liquor in growing boys. The saloon was condemned in strong language in attempts to create an emotional hatred of the liquor traffic. The saloon was "the storm center of crime; the devil's headquarters on earth . . . the defiler of youth; the enemy of the home; the foe of peace; the deceiver of nations; the beast of sensuality; the past master of intrigue; the vagabond of poverty; the social vulture . . . the enlisting office of sin; the serpent of Eden; a ponderous second edition of hell, revised, enlarged and illuminated."²³

The propaganda of the prohibition forces appealed to the moral sentiment of the people, and although there was some attempt made along educational lines to inform people of the harmful physical effects of alcohol, the propaganda was generally designed to appeal strongly to the emotions. After national prohibition had been achieved, it is significant to note that the wets made little headway in their attacks on the eighteenth amendment until they began using the same type of propaganda in reverse. They could talk about states' rights and tax losses and the infringement on personal liberty eloquently and interminably, but they got nowhere because nobody paid any attention to them. Finally, they launched a

²³ Quoted from the *American Issue* (Kentucky edition), April 1912, by Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 39. By permission of Columbia University Press.

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great campaign of propaganda, basing their appeals on a high moral plane. Crime, disrespect for law, political corruption, the breakdown of religion, drunkenness, the sins of the younger generation, and the moral dangers that threatened were all attributed to prohibition. This campaign was successful, and the prohibition amendment was repealed in a remarkably short time. The nature of the propaganda that was most successful on the prohibition issue, both in the case of the wets and of the dries, is eloquent evidence of the power of a moral and emotional appeal to the American people.

Well-organized pressure groups now make frequent use of letters and telegrams from the folks back home, particularly when they are trying to influence Congress. A member of the Senate has declared that "A Senator's mail is probably more than half pure propaganda," and that half the letters received by representatives and senators from their constituents are the result of propaganda coming from lobbyists in Washington.²⁴ Often many of these letters are exactly alike, or at least similar enough to give evidence of a common parentage. One congressman said in 1924:

Long before the details of the Mellon plan [for tax reduction] were given to Congress the Congress was overwhelmed with letters and telegrams from every section of this country indorsing the Mellon plan in all its particulars . . . and imploring us to vote against any other suggestion as to how the Federal taxes might be reduced.

Many of these letters, written at the same time and in different sections of the country, were identical in language, and one differed from the other in not so much as the dotting of an 'i' or the crossing of a 't'.²⁵

The American Legion is among the groups that have made

²⁴ *Congressional Record*, April 8, 1924, 68th Congress, 1st Session, 5799, reprinted from *The New York Times*, March 9, 1924.

²⁵ *Congressional Record*, February 15, 1924, 68th Congress, 1st Session, 2490.

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most effective use of letters and telegrams from constituents to congressmen. Since the Legion has had a large and compact membership, and a nation-wide organization which made possible effective use of it, the Legion has ordinarily not had to go outside the ranks of its own members and their relatives in order to put powerful pressure on the government. The Legion has had a very effective system of stimulating telegrams from home; an excellent lobbyist and an organization of interested members extending into almost every community in the United States. There are more than ten thousand post commanders. A brief wire from Washington indicating that a congressman is not supporting their program is enough to bring an immediate deluge of protesting telegrams from Legion members, relatives, and friends in his district. Such messages create the impression of a popular demand out of proportion to the voting strength of the telegram senders in the district, and frighten legislators in a short time. Most bills introduced into Congress proposing veteran legislation receive little opposition and are pushed right through when the lobbyists tell one of "their men" in Congress to put them through. When there is any serious opposition, a telegram is sent by the lobby to the forty-eight state commanders of the American Legion, relayed by them to the post commanders, and by the post commanders to the members. The telegram urges that every legitimate means be used to see that the bill in question is passed with enough majority to override a Presidential veto.²⁶ The result is a flood of messages. All the while, the legislative agent at Washington is suggesting to recalcitrant congressmen that if they do not pass the bill, their successors will. The result, without fail, has been the passage of the bill.

Corporations and other business concerns make use of their

²⁶ Marcus Duffield, "The American Legion in Politics," *The Forum*, Vol. LXXXV (1931), 260.

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employees when they think it desirable to stimulate the sending of letters and telegrams to create the impression of a popular demand for certain action from Congress. Some years ago, Mr. C. S. Thomas, then United States Senator from Colorado, described his experience with the sugar lobby. In 1913, one of the big sugar companies sent a letter to its employees in Longmont, Colorado, telling them that the tariff bill before Congress would have a serious effect on their industry if passed, and would make it necessary for them to shut down some of their factories and discharge some of their men. The employees were asked to write letters to their Senators urging elimination of the section of the bill reducing the tariff on sugar. A suggested model letter was enclosed. Employees were also requested to advise the head of their department when they had written such a letter. According to Senator Thomas, the employees evidently followed instructions, for he received several thousand letters in the form or the spirit of the copy sent out by the company. The same policy seems to have been followed in other towns besides Longmont, evidently on the advice of a traveling publicity agent. Senator Thomas would receive a large batch of letters and telegrams from a particular town one day, the next day he would receive a large batch from another town, and from time to time other towns would be heard from, most of the messages in all cases being almost identical in phraseology.²⁷

In 1935, a Senate committee investigating lobbying activities discovered that companies opposing the Wheeler-Rayburn Utilities Holding Company Bill had in some cases not only signed the names of their employees to telegrams without any real authorization, but in some cases their agents had signed other names picked at random without even informing the

²⁷ Charles S. Thomas, "My Adventures With the Sugar Lobby," *World's Work*, Vol. XXVI (1913), 547, 548.

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owners of the names that they were being used to oppose the bill. One of the agents of the Utility Investing Corporation in a Pennsylvania city was sent a number of ten-word telegrams from the office of the corporation president. "One form would denounce the bill as 'vicious,' another as 'unconstitutional.' Another would describe the sender as a bondholder whose 'life savings were jeopardized,' while another, which was quite generally used, denounced the legislation as 'unsound' and urged the member of Congress to whom it was addressed to be 'courageous' and vote 'no.' " ²⁸ When confronted with specific messages and when asked who wrote them, the lobbyist replied that he did not know who wrote them, but he thought the stenographer signed them. Many of the names used were those of utility employees. Their names were used if they indicated no opposition.

"And if they objected to their names being used, to whom would they object?" asked a senator.

"Their bosses, Your Honor," said the witness, and the laughter that followed continued so long that the chairman rapped for order." ²⁹

One representative got suspicious because he received so many telegrams on the holding company bill from people whose names began with B that he wrote to one of them whom he knew. The man replied that he had not sent any telegram. Two other friends furnished similar information. The Senate committee's investigation revealed that hundreds of telegrams had come from Warren, Pennsylvania, urging defeat of the "death clause" in the bill, the signatures to which were unauthorized. They had been picked at random from the city directory. The telegrams had been dictated by a representative of one of the largest holding companies in the country. ³⁰

²⁸ *New York Times*, July 24, 1935.

²⁹ *New York Times*, July 24, 1935.

³⁰ *New York Times*, July 17, 1935.

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The use of fake and unauthorized telegrams was an attempt to counterfeit a public opinion which did not exist. Such strategy is designed to make congressmen hear a voice which they think is the voice of the people. As long as they do not discover that it is really the voice of political ventriloquists, they will shape their actions as though it were the voice of the people. But lobbyists probably do not ordinarily resort to the extreme measures of clumsy chicanery that some of the opponents of the holding company bill used. When they are able to create the appearance of a public opinion without going to the telephone directory for names to put on telegrams, they will not get their telegram signatures in that way. However, it is a relatively common practice for employers to press their employees into service in order to create a pseudo opinion. As long as public opinion exercises a controlling influence over the actions of political officials, those who want to influence the government will use public opinion to obtain their objectives, to the extent that they can control it, and they will try to create an exaggerated impression of their popular strength when exaggeration seems necessary.

Newspapers and magazines are sometimes made to fight the battles of special interests, because the press exercises considerable influence and it is still popularly regarded as showing some indication of the trend of public opinion. In the days when the battle over prohibition was waxing warmest, the United States Brewers' Association advertised for frankly political purposes in newspapers and magazines, employed special writers to write articles for medical journals and other periodicals, and furnished "boiler-plate" material to hundreds of small newspapers all over the country. In some instances, they even advanced the money for the outright purchase of important newspapers.³¹

³¹ Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 263. By permission of Columbia University Press.

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Patent-medicine interests have made ingenious use of the newspapers. The maker of a widely advertised catarrh "cure" once disclosed to a meeting of patent medicine makers that his company had discovered an effective way to prevent hostile legislation. The plan was to shift responsibility to the newspapers by inserting in all advertising contracts a clause providing that the contract would be voided if any law was passed in that state prohibiting the manufacture or sale of patent medicines. Then, whenever a threatening bill was considered by the legislature, the company would wire the newspapers urging them to oppose the bill and suggesting that its passage might make necessary the discontinuance of advertising in that state. Another manufacturing company had a clause in its contracts stating that the enactment of state or national legislation adverse to the manufacture or sale of patent medicine would void the contract. Such clauses in a number of cases resulted in powerful newspaper opposition to patent medicine legislation.³²

Although pressure groups devote much attention to legislators after they are elected and try to keep the vocal opinion of their constituents favorable to their special interests, they also realize that the *election* of favorable legislators is a matter of basic importance. They know that the surest way to get the legislation that they want, as one prohibition leader said, "is for the sovereign voters, through well-planned organization, to elect men as their representatives . . . who will write the laws upon the statute books."³³ Accordingly, a well-organized pressure group uses its influence to secure the election of candidates favorable to its cause and the defeat of candidates hostile to it.

The leaders of the pressure group are non-partisan when engaged in such political activities. They are interested in meas-

³² Edward B. Logan, "Lobbying," Supplement to *The Annals*, Vol. CXLIV, 6, 7.

³³ Quoted in Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 128. By permission of Columbia University Press.

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ures rather than men and support the men most likely to help them secure the enactment of the desired measures. If one candidate will not support them, they bargain with his opponent. This gives them added strength, and in numerous cases they hold a balance of power strong enough to throw the election to the candidate that they favor. Since the pressure group is an organization united by the common concern of its members with certain of their vital interests, its control over its membership is likely to be a stronger one than that of the political party. This situation leads political parties to pay a great deal of attention to the lobbyists of powerful pressure groups. The most powerful groups exercise most control over the party, just as they exercise most influence on the government. Such group representation of interests is not harmful in itself—in fact, it may sometimes furnish an effective channel for wholesome representation—but its weakness lies in the fact that all group interests are not equally well organized. Victory goes to the strong rather than to the deserving. After the candidate is elected, if he owes his election to pressure-group support, he is likely to feel that it is more important to his success than his political party. The party will be unable to control legislation because legislators break party lines to serve the special interests whose support elected them and whose favor is necessary to their continuance in office. The non-partisan policy of the pressure groups affects elections, and through that influence weakens party lines in the legislature itself.

The attempts of pressure groups to win the support of public opinion, and through it to determine the policies of the government, are an indication that public opinion is sovereign. This is as it should be in a country where the government is supposed to be controlled by the people. It is a wholesome sign that popular government is a reality. However, a danger lies in the possibility that the propaganda activities of pressure groups may

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lead to the formation of public opinions that are unsound. Both the people and their elected representatives are influenced by the information that is available. What they think they see determines the way they act. If their information is furnished in large part by organized special interests, the opinions they form and the policies they adopt may serve the special interests rather than the whole people. Where numerous groups compete with one another, the propaganda of one group may offset the propaganda of another, but unorganized interests are likely to suffer in such contests for the public mind. The conditions of modern life, where such contests take place on an increasingly more complicated scale, call for political intelligence of a high order on the part of the individuals who compose the public.

XIII

ARTIFICIAL RESTRAINTS ON PUBLIC OPINION

“IF THERE be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it,” declared Thomas Jefferson in his first inaugural address. In this classic statement of his faith in human reason, the author of the Declaration of Independence was following closely in the steps of John Milton, who had said, a good many years before, that Truth should be allowed to grapple with Falsehood without limitation and none need fear the outcome. “Truth is strong next to the Almighty,” Milton said, and only error needs the protection of stratagems and suppression. This is the view of those who have confidence in human reason and respect for human personality. A contrary view is held by dictators and others who lack confidence in the ability of anyone but themselves to arrive at proper conclusions.

Public opinion is normally arrived at after discussion. The democratic method permits a free competition of ideas. But there are always some people who believe that the unrestrained propaganda of “false” opinions may work harm to the souls and bodies of men for too long a time, even though truth may triumph in the end. They would help their brethren to find and hold to the truth by preventing the expression of harmful opinions. They would replace the natural selection of ideas with artificial selection. As Mr. Justice Holmes once suggested,

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persecution for the expression of opinions is perfectly logical if "you have no doubt of your premises or your power and want a certain result with all your heart." Even those who do not respect the wisdom of public opinion fear its power and desire to direct its course in order to further their own interests or promote what they consider the cause of righteousness.

Attempts to control or stifle the development of opinion by limiting discussion may take various forms. In general, such attempts may be divided into two main classes; they may be by private action or mob action, or by legal action. When the law seems too slow and indirect, individuals may take matters into their own hands. Violent attempts at the suppression of free discussion are most frequent when such discussion seems to threaten established economic interests.

Illustrations of mob action to prevent free discussion are all too easy to find in American history. In the political campaign of 1936, minority party candidates were forcibly prevented from speaking or holding rallies on twenty-eight occasions in thirteen states. These suppressions were not always a result of mob violence; some were instances where a candidate was denied the use of public halls by local authorities. The Communist candidate, Earl Browder, was clapped into jail when he went to Terre Haute, Indiana, to make a speech. He was held overnight and then turned loose without being tried for any offense. A few weeks later, when he went to Tampa, Florida, and started to address a meeting, a band of men slugged their way to the front, upset the speaker's stand, and broke up the meeting. The leader of the mob said later, "We're just a group of red-blooded American citizens," and added, "We don't care to discuss it any further, but we're proud of the part we've taken."¹ Apparently Tampa has more than its share of such citizens, for slightly less than a year before this incident took place, three

¹ *New York Times*, October 26, 1936.

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socialists were arrested, taken to the police station, and then kidnaped from the station by policemen, driven to a lonely spot outside the city and there stripped, mutilated, burned, and tarred, and left beside the road. One of them, Joseph Shoemaker, died after nine days of horrible suffering. In times of stress, such occurrences are, of course, more frequent. In the period before the Civil War, anyone suspected of being an Abolitionist was not safe in the South. The exact number of Abolitionists or suspected Abolitionists who were whipped, jailed, or killed is not known, but we do know that it was considerable.² Similarly, Tories were mobbed in the Revolutionary period, and suspected pro-Germans were not safe during the World War. But suppression continues in times of peace and relative calm. On January 21, 1938, a United States Senator from a southern state, in the midst of a speech opposing an anti-lynching bill, said of a Negro journalist, "If the hybrid who penned the lines I have just read lived in a Southern State and dared to print these words of treason and distribute them among the citizens thereof, I doubt not that his mongrel carcass would mar the beauty of a southern magnolia tree before the ink upon his damnable sheet had time to congeal."³ That is one way to prevent the spread of "error."

A more respectable method of discouraging free discussion is the denial of the use of suitable halls to speakers of an unpopular cause. This is not a new technique. We find, for instance, that Fanny Wright, one of the editors of a magazine considered liberal in 1829, had some difficulty in arranging for speaking engagements. In one instance, according to a newspaper account, "Miss Wright, having been denied the use of the Walnut Street Theater to lecture in . . . made exertion through some of her

² See Leon Whipple, *The Story of Civil Liberty in the United States*, 86-9, for specific examples. Vanguard Press, Inc.

³ *Congressional Record*, 75th Congress, Third Session, 1192.

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friends to get Washington Hall; this was also refused, but finally Military Hall was secured. Miss Wright arrived, but was deterred, it is supposed, by the pressure of the crowd, from alighting. She addressed a few words to the crowd and drove away.”⁴

More recently, we find the school board of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, refusing the use of a hall in one of the public school buildings for a meeting at which a retired Major General of the United States Marines was to speak on the subject “War Is A Racket.” The board had permitted its halls to be used for newspaper evening cooking classes and for Democratic and Republican political rallies, but refused to allow them to be used for a discussion of the racketeering features of war.⁵ Similarly, the United States Chamber of Commerce refused to permit the Town Hall of Washington to continue the use of its auditorium in 1934, presumably because of the nature of the discussions arranged for. One of the sponsors of the Town Hall was Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.⁶ The Communists have, of course, suffered more from such discriminations than such mildly liberal organizations as those with which the President’s wife or retired major generals are associated. During the national political campaign of 1936, Norman Thomas protested to President Roosevelt and Governor Lehman because one of his opponents in the Presidential race, Earl Browder, the Communist candidate, was denied the use of auditoriums in Buffalo. Mr. Thomas said that he was humiliated as an American and a New Yorker “to learn that there is a movement in this city to write down Buffalo to the level of Terre Haute, Ind., and Tampa, Fla., by denying Earl Browder a reasonable chance to be heard.

⁴ *The Philadelphia National Gazette*, quoted in Leon Whipple, *The Story of Civil Liberty in the United States*, 74, 75. Vanguard Press, Inc.

⁵ *The Progressive*, November 14, 1936.

⁶ *New York Times*, December 5, 1934.

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Mr. Browder is the candidate of a recognized party.”⁷ The spokesmen of an unpopular minority find their paths filled with obstacles when they try to reach the public with their message.

Although attempts by private individuals acting either in mobs or through their power to deny the use of halls or similar tactics may at times seriously hamper the normal development of public opinion, interference with free discussion by laws is more important and more dangerous. The Constitution of the United States provides that “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” Most state constitutions contain similar limitations on their state legislatures. The Supreme Court has also held in numerous cases that freedom of speech and press “are among the fundamental personal rights and ‘liberties’ protected by the due process clause of the 14th Amendment from impairment by the states.” In spite of the sweeping language of the Constitution, the Supreme Court has never held that speech and press are subject to no legislative limitations. In 1925, in the *Gitlow Case*, Mr. Justice Sanford declared in the Court’s decision, “It is a fundamental principle, long established, that the freedom of speech and of the press which is secured by the Constitution does not confer an absolute right to speak or publish, without responsibility, whatever one may choose, or an unrestricted and unbridled license that gives immunity for every possible use of language, and prevents the punishment of those who abuse this freedom.”⁸ Two years later, again speaking for the Court, Mr. Justice Sanford said of the freedom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution “. . . that a state in the exercise of its police power may punish those who

⁷ *New York Times*, October 28, 1936.

⁸ 268 U. S. 666.

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abuse this freedom by utterances inimical to the public welfare, tending to incite to crime, disturb the public peace, or endanger the foundations of organized government and threaten its overthrow by unlawful means, is not open to question.”⁹

Some limitation on freedom of speech and press has commonly been considered desirable, notwithstanding the principle laid down in the Constitution. It has long been an offense at common law “to counsel and solicit another to commit a felony or other aggravated offense.” In England, the common law also allowed punishment for seditious libel, which meant the publication of words or documents with the intention of arousing hatred or contempt or exciting disaffection against the king and the government. Although the Constitution of the United States might have been interpreted as repealing or modifying these doctrines in the United States, early attempts were made to prosecute political opponents by invoking the common law doctrine of seditious libel. However, grave doubts existed as to the common law jurisdiction of the federal courts, and a Federalist-controlled Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts to make “seditious libel” a crime by statute. The Republicans contended that those laws were unconstitutional, but they were not held unconstitutional by the courts before they were repealed. Since that time, various other laws of similar content and purpose have been enacted at various times by the national and state governments, sometimes to be upheld by the courts and sometimes to be declared unconstitutional. The essence of the matter seems to be that the courts will tolerate such interference with free discussion as they consider reasonable for the protection of the general welfare.

The Alien and Sedition laws of the Federalists were designed to silence political opposition. The Alien law allowed the President to deport any alien whom he considered dangerous

⁹ *Whitney v. California*, 274 U. S. 371.

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to the peace and safety of the United States or suspected of treasonably plotting against the government. The Sedition Act punished false, scandalous, and malicious writings against the government of the United States, or either House of the Congress, or the President, if published with intent to defame any of them, or to excite against them the hatred of the people, or to stir up sedition or to excite any unlawful combination for opposing or resisting any law, or to aid any hostile designs of any foreign nation against the United States. The Alien Act was never enforced, but the Sedition Act was used against editors and political leaders whom the Federalists desired to silence or punish. Public opinion was so strongly opposed to these laws that even the Sedition Act was not applied in very many instances, and in those instances conviction was generally obtained as a result of the power and prejudice of the judges. When the people had a chance to speak at the next election, they turned the Federalists out of office, and the victorious Republicans repealed the objectionable laws. Never since that time, either in peace or in war, has a political party attempted to destroy or throttle a major opposition party by such legislation.

War stimulates the demand for limitations on free discussion. During the Civil War, some thirty thousand persons in the North suspected of being southern sympathizers were seized by federal marshals or army officials and held without trial until these officers decided to free them.¹⁰ This high-handed conduct of the executive was condemned by the courts but was carried on with a nonchalant disregard for either courts or Constitution. In the enthusiasm aroused by the World War, Senator Chamberlain, of Oregon, introduced a bill that would have made any person in the United States who published anything endangering or interfering with the successful operation of our

¹⁰ James P. Hall, "Free Speech in War Time," *Columbia Law Review*, Vol. XXI (1921), 527-8.

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forces a spy subject to court martial and the penalty of death. Such a proposal was plainly contrary to the Constitution as interpreted by the courts, and it was dropped when attacked by President Wilson. The desire for some kind of repressive legislation led to the passage of the Espionage Acts of 1917 and 1918, which provided for control over civilians to be exercised through the regular courts.

The Espionage Act of 1917 authorized punishment by large fines and long prison sentences for anyone who wilfully made false statements or reports with the intention of interfering with the operation of the military or naval forces of the United States, or wilfully attempted to cause insubordination in the armed forces, or wilfully obstructed the recruiting or enlisting service of the United States to the injury of the service. The Act made non-mailable any matter violating the Act or advocating treason, insurrection, or forcible resistance to any law of the United States. This law did not prove inclusive enough to suit the prosecuting officials, and in 1918 it was broadened by the establishment of new offenses. Under this law, an individual made himself liable for a ten thousand dollar fine or twenty years imprisonment if, during war time, he said or did anything to obstruct the sale of government bonds, or said or wrote any disloyal or abusive language intended to bring the American form of government or the Constitution or the flag into contempt, or used any language intended to incite resistance to the United States, or urged curtailment of the production of anything necessary for the prosecution of the war with the intention of hindering its prosecution, or advocated or suggested the doing of any of these acts.

The power of Congress to limit free discussion in order to prevent "espionage" or sedition in time of war was upheld by the Supreme Court in numerous decisions. In 1919, the

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Schenck¹¹ Case was decided by the Court. It involved the rights of individuals who had been charged with conspiring to violate the Espionage Act of 1917 by attempting to cause insubordination in the armed forces of the United States and to obstruct the recruitment and enlistment service of the United States, by printing and sending to drafted men a document intended to cause such insubordination and obstruction. The document had suggested that the conscription act violated the Constitution, that it was despotism in its worst form, and that a conscript was little better than a convict. It declared, "If you do not assert and support your rights, you are helping to deny or disparage rights which it is the solemn duty of all citizens and residents of the United States to retain." Mr. Justice Holmes, speaking for the Court, upheld the conviction of Schenck and his associates and laid down a rule which has come to be regarded as a sound and fundamental principle of law in such matters. He said:

We admit that in many places and in ordinary times the defendants in saying all that was said in the circular would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. . . . The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. . . . The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right.

The decision of Justice Holmes interprets the law so that

¹¹ 249 U. S. 47.

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words and intentions will not be punishable. The expression of opinion is punishable only because of its relation to the war power of the United States and only when the relation is so close that the words used constitute "a clear and present danger" of injury to the raising and maintenance of the armed forces. This interpretation does not seem to be out of accord with the spirit of the First Amendment or the purpose of the framers of the Constitution.

In the cases that followed, the Supreme Court did not always follow the principle that "a clear and present danger" must be shown to justify conviction. In 1920, the conviction of five officers of a corporation publishing a German-language newspaper was upheld, although their offense, according to the dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice Brandeis, consisted only in publishing "harmless additions to or omissions from news items" and "impotent expressions of editorial opinion." Such a decision, said the dissenting Justice, "will doubtless discourage criticism of the policies of the government."¹² In the *Abrams Case*,¹³ the Court upheld conviction of Abrams and others for conspiring to unlawfully "utter, print, write, or publish" disloyal and abusive language about the American form of government, "intended to incite, provoke, and encourage resistance to the United States" in the war, and to advocate curtailment of production of things necessary to the prosecution of the war. Mr. Justice Holmes dissented, objecting to the conviction of anyone solely because of "the surreptitious publishing of a silly leaflet." He said, "It is only the present danger of immediate evil or an intent to bring it about that warrants Congress in setting a limit to the expression of opinion where private rights are not concerned. Congress certainly cannot forbid all effort to change the mind of the country." We may conclude that,

¹² *Schaefer v. United States*, 251 U. S. 493, 494.

¹³ 250 U. S. 616.

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Supreme Court majorities being what they are, *in practice* the Constitution of the United States is *not* "a law for rulers and people, equally in war and in peace," which "covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances," as the Court said it was a good many years ago.

Since the World War, a number of cases involving the power of a state to limit freedom of speech and press have come before the Supreme Court. In 1925, the Court upheld the conviction of a man connected with two left-wing Socialist papers in New York City¹⁴ for violating a state law prohibiting advocacy of the overthrow of organized government by force or any unlawful means. According to the Court's decision, the statute did not penalize the utterance or publication of abstract doctrines or "academic discussion having no quality of incitement to any concrete action." In this case, the Court held, "The Manifesto, plainly, is neither the statement of abstract doctrine nor . . . mere prediction that industrial disturbances and revolutionary mass strikes will result spontaneously in an inevitable process of evolution in the economic system. It advocates and urges in fervent language mass action which shall progressively foment industrial disturbances and through political mass strikes and revolutionary mass action overthrow and destroy organized parliamentary government." Mr. Justice Holmes dissented on the ground that the actions of the accused did not constitute "a clear and present danger." And he declared, "It is said that this manifesto was more than a theory, that it was an incitement. Every idea is an incitement. . . . The only difference between the expression of an opinion and an incitement in the narrower sense is the speaker's enthusiasm for the result. . . . But whatever may be thought of the redundant discourse before us it had no chance of starting a present conflagration. If

¹⁴ *Gillow v. State of New York*, 268 U. S. 652.

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in the long run the beliefs expressed in proletarian dictatorship are destined to be accepted by the dominant forces of the community, the only meaning of free speech is that they should be given their chance and have their way.”

In 1927, the conviction of Miss Anita Whitney for violation of a California Criminal Syndicalism Act was upheld.¹⁵ Miss Whitney was convicted of assisting in the organization of the Communist Labor party of California, of being a member of it, and of assembling with it. The acts were considered illegal because the party was formed to teach criminal syndicalism. Four years later, the Court held unconstitutional a portion of the California law making it a felony to display “a red flag . . . or any flag, badge, banner, or device of any color or form” in any assembly or from any building as a symbol of opposition to organized government or an aid to seditious propaganda.¹⁶ Chief Justice Hughes, in the Court’s decision, held that the law was too vague and too inclusive. He said, “The maintenance of the opportunity for free political discussion to the end that government may be responsive to the will of the people and that changes may be obtained by lawful means, an opportunity essential to the security of the Republic, is a fundamental principle of our constitutional system. A statute which . . . is so vague and indefinite as to permit the punishment of the fair use of this opportunity is repugnant to the guaranty of liberty contained in the Fourteenth Amendment.”

In 1937, the Supreme Court unanimously held unconstitutional an Oregon Criminal Syndicalism law as it was applied to Dirk De Jonge.¹⁷ De Jonge’s offense was that he had participated in a meeting called by the Communist party. He was not indicted for participating in the organization of the party,

¹⁵ 274 U. S. 352.

¹⁶ *Stromberg v. People of California*, 283 U. S. 359.

¹⁷ 299 U. S. 353.

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or for joining it, or for soliciting members, or for distributing communist literature. Nor was he charged with advocating criminal syndicalism or any other act either at the meeting or elsewhere. The sole offense with which he was charged, and for which he was sentenced in the state courts to seven years imprisonment, was "that he had assisted in the conduct of a public meeting albeit otherwise lawful, which was held under the auspices of the Communist party." Chief Justice Hughes, in the Court's decision, pointed out that the law so interpreted would make illegal a public meeting called by the Communist party to discuss the tariff, American foreign policy, taxation, political candidates, or any other innocuous subject. This was going too far, he said. "The right of peaceful assembly is a right cognate to those of free speech and free press," and like them is protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. The state can protect itself against the abuse of these rights, but "The rights themselves must not be curtailed." And, the decision went on to say, "Peaceable assembly for lawful discussion cannot be made a crime. The holding of meetings for peaceable political action cannot be proscribed. Those who assist in the conduct of such meetings cannot be branded as criminals on that score. The question . . . is not as to the auspices under which the meeting is held, but as to its purpose; not as to the relations of the speakers, but whether their utterances transcend the bounds of the freedom of speech which the Constitution protects."

Laws of either state or nation of the type discussed are likely to prove dangerous chiefly because they are easily subject to abuse. The utterance of radical doctrines may be objectionable to the majority of a community's inhabitants, and it might some day constitute "a clear and present danger," but as long as the danger is remote and uncertain, the evils of limiting discussion outweigh the possible benefits. Overt criminal acts are always

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punishable by ordinary laws. The enactment of espionage and criminal syndicalism statutes allows the punishment of much less tangible offenses. Some of these statutes have been written in such broad terms that the only limit to their application is the opinion of court officials as to what is reasonable, not always an adequate guarantee that the spirit of the Constitution will be respected in times of stress. Narrow minded or excited officials sometimes construe as revolutionary loose utterances that had no such definite meaning in the mind of their author.¹⁸

Perhaps the most extreme of these restrictive laws are the "red flag laws," such as the California law that the Court held unconstitutional. A number of states have had such laws on their statute books. They would punish men for what a jury may think they think. The supposedly objectionable ideas may never have been expressed, but the jury assumes that the individual must have had them in his head or he would not have displayed the prohibited emblem. It is going far in the direction of tyranny when men are punished for what they are supposed to think rather than for what they do.

Even in the case of laws that punish for words said rather than for unexpressed thoughts, there is grave danger of abuse. A dominant social group may use such laws to prevent the advocates of "radical" ideas from bringing disagreeable or stimulating facts to the attention of the public.¹⁹ The likelihood of abuse is particularly strong in times of social or economic or political unrest when men's passions are running hot. Unreasonable sentences may be meted out for trivial offenses, as in the Abrams Case, for instance, where three of the defendants were given the maximum sentence of twenty years in prison and a fine of several thousand dollars for publishing two leaflets alleged to contain disloyal and abusive language about the Amer-

¹⁸ John A. Ryan, *Declining Liberty and Other Papers*, 41. The Macmillan Co.

¹⁹ See Zechariah Chafee, *Freedom of Speech*, 220.

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ican government and an incitement against the production of munitions necessary for the prosecution of the war. Mr. Justice Holmes called them "poor and puny anonymities," and certainly there is no evidence that they ever had any practical results; yet the accused were given the maximum sentence allowed by the law. As Professor Chafee has pointed out, if these people had actually and successfully conspired to tie up every munition plant in the United States, their punishment could not have been greater.²⁰

After the World War was ended, but before the patriotic fervor that it engendered had subsided, the House of Representatives of the United States denied to Victor Berger, elected to represent a Wisconsin district, the right to take his seat, and the lower house of the legislature of New York expelled five of its duly elected members because they were Socialists. Certain sections of the American public were thus denied the right to select representatives of their choice, as provided for by law, because they chose to elect men with ideas considered subversive by the majority of the representatives of other districts. In the case of Victor Berger, Representative James R. Mann, one of the few who opposed his exclusion, said that he did not share Berger's views but he was willing "to meet his views in an argument before the people rather than to say we shall deny him the opportunity to be heard when selected by this people in the legal form, and invite them, in effect, to resort to violence."²¹ The action of the New York Assembly in expelling its Socialist members was strenuously opposed by Charles E. Hughes, the Bar Association of New York City, and other prominent individuals and groups, as well as by both conservative and liberal newspapers and magazines. But the Assembly persisted, with a "do or die" attitude that made them appear a little ridiculous

²⁰ Zechariah Chafee, *Freedom of Speech*, 148.

²¹ *Congressional Record*, January 10, 1920, 66th Congress, 2d Session, 1339.

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in the eyes of the public. The result was that public opinion swung away from suppressive actions and the abnormal excitement of the early post-war period gave way to a calmer attitude toward so-called radicals. Fortunately, cases of the exclusion of the representatives of an unpopular minority from American legislative bodies are extremely rare. Such exclusions would mean that the government could not represent the public will with its normal approach to accuracy, because the proscribed sections of the public were not allowed to express their opinions in the legislative body.

The public limits individual liberty in a wide variety of ways, and in spite of the fact that the principle of free speech and a free press is written into the American Constitution, there is a rather general acceptance of the belief that even these rights are subject to public limitation when they are abused. The chief disagreement arises over the question as to what principles should guide us in applying limitations. We may agree with the view attributed by Mr. Justice Brandeis to the men who won our independence, when he said that they "believed that the final end of the state was to make men free to develop their faculties" and that they "valued liberty both as an end and as a means,"²² or we may hold with Dr. John A. Ryan that speech and writing are only means to human welfare and are not ends in themselves.²³ In either case, if we follow the spirit of the men who wrote the Constitution, we must agree that limitations on discussion should be applied very conservatively, and only when the danger to established order seems immediate and highly destructive.

If speech and writing are only means to ends and the ends are "virtue and truth," they still remain means to curb which may make impossible the achievement of the desired ends.

²² Dissenting opinion in *Whitney v. California*, 274 U. S. 375.

²³ *Declining Liberty and Other Papers*, 39. The Macmillan Co.

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We can find the truth only when there is free competition of ideas. If force is used to prevent such competition, there is at least as much likelihood that it will be thrown on the side of error as that it will be thrown on the side of truth. History demonstrates that a large proportion of the generally accepted beliefs of the past were wrong.

As individuals we guide the whole course of our lives by certain principles that we hold to be true, yet we have no guarantee that they are true except that they have survived the free competition of ideas. If they are wrong, we may hope that future evidence will guide us to better principles. When there is no competition of ideas, when force shuts off discussion, we can be reasonably sure that we will find the truth, if at all, only by accident. Under such circumstances, the mind of the individual will stagnate, unless stimulating ideas are bootlegged in, and this stagnation will be reflected in the currents of public opinion. The only certain road to the discovery and spread of truth lies in freedom for the individual to think as he will and to speak as he thinks. Only when speech threatens to bring about action that will interfere with this process and cause serious social destruction is limitation justifiable.

However, in the affairs of life, men tend to be intolerant and to desire the suppression of discussion that will threaten beliefs or institutions to which they are strongly attached. When they want a certain result with all their hearts and have no doubt in their own minds as to its rightness, it is only natural that they should desire to sweep away all opposition by law if they have the power. Small and advanced minorities in particular are likely to suffer from such action. Many of the men who wrote the Constitution were of the opinion that a popular majority is more to be feared than a monarch and that individual rights could not safely be left wholly at their mercy. Numerous provisions in the Constitution are designed to serve as checks upon

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the hasty action of the majority. They are meant to guarantee the rights of the minority. The wisdom of some such guarantee cannot be doubted if we accept Charles A. Beard's conclusion that "all the great lunges forward along the path from barbarism to civilization have been forced by energetic minorities, against the indifference or the opposition of majorities." ²⁴

Conscientious advocates of suppression will contend that certain social, economic, and political principles are essential to good order and the public welfare, and that society is justified in limiting free discussion if it threatens these principles. They will contend further that, although truth may ultimately triumph over error, the harm done in the meantime to the minds and souls of men through the unrestrained propagation of false doctrines is too costly to permit, and that the majority may intervene for the protection of the public welfare. Although this viewpoint is entitled to serious consideration, we need constantly to bear in mind that neither a majority nor their delegated censors are ever infallible.

The remarks of Mr. Justice Holmes in his *Abrams Case* dissent are pertinent in this connection. He said:

But when men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas,—that the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted in the market; and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out. That, at any rate, is the theory of our Constitution. It is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. Every year, if not every day, we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge. While that experiment is part of our system I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught

²⁴ Charles A. Beard, "The Fiction of Majority Rule," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CXL (1927), 834, 835.

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with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country.²⁵

The interests of society are served by the advancement of new ideas and the generally unrestricted criticism of established institutions. When Socrates was on trial for his life because he had disseminated radical ideas, he declared his belief that God had attached him to Athens to serve the same function that a gadfly does in arousing a large and sluggish horse by stinging it. The Athenians, Socrates declared, could easily kill him and pass the rest of their lives in peaceful slumber, unless God sent another gadfly to sting them. Gadflies are highly useful in society. Insurgent members of established political parties, crusading minority parties, and militant independents help to prevent corruption in the body politic or ferret it out if it does creep in. They also lead the way in the advance toward the acceptance of new ideas. We may kill a Socrates, burn a Savonarola, or imprison a Debs, but posterity will regard us with contempt or condescension if we do.

Even from the standpoint of present expediency and stability, freedom of discussion is often the safest principle. Suppression sometimes affords opportunity for maladjusted agitators, through martyrdom, to obtain distinction without ability. If the safety valve is kept open, ideas will win or lose according to their merits. Suppression may lead to an explosion.²⁶ Mr. Justice Brandeis said of the founders of our country, "But they knew that order cannot be secured merely through fear of punishment for its infraction; that it is hazardous to discourage thought, hope and imagination; that fear breeds repression; that repression breeds hate; that hate menaces stable govern-

²⁵ *Abrams v. United States*, 250 U. S. 630.

²⁶ W. Brooke Graves, *Readings in Public Opinion*, 950. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

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ment; that the path of safety lies in the opportunity to discuss freely supposed grievances and proposed remedies; and that the fitting remedy for evil counsels is good ones." ²⁷

That this is very practical doctrine is illustrated in the headlines of the *Chicago Tribune* of May 2, 1929. They were as follows:

15 DIE IN GERMAN RED RIOTS

15 killed, 30 seriously injured, 12 policemen wounded, scores slightly injured and 700 arrested was the toll of Berlin's May day demonstrations, carried out by the communists despite police protection.

4,000 JAILED IN PARIS

Paris, May 1.—More than 4,000 persons were arrested by police, who were determined to crush any communist or Socialist May day demonstration.

LONDON REDS MUST HAVE TEA

May day orations to stir up a proletariat revolution started so late that tea time came around before the crowd got sufficiently aroused. So the proletariat knocked off revolting and adjourned for tea, which had been thoughtfully provided by the organizers of today's demonstrations.

The only disorder of the day was furnished by a party of students from London university, who came to annoy the communists, but the police took the attitude that the reds ought to have the right to agitate to their heart's content on May day, so the students were put out of the park.

Democratic government presupposes that men will be allowed to discuss questions of public interest and present their views openly, in order that secret machinations and revolutionary agitation will be unnecessary and unjustifiable. Even appeals to violence, when openly made, do not necessarily produce violence; in fact, they usually do *not* produce violence.

²⁷ Concurring opinion in *Whitney v. California*, 274 U. S. 375.

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The common sense of the people is a better protection against dangerous ideas than any repressive law that may be enacted. The fanatics of reaction are more dangerous to human welfare than the fanatics of radicalism, because they are more likely to have their way.

We will profit most if we turn on existing institutions and prejudices the calm clear light of reasoned common sense. There is much in our country worth keeping and preserving. We can make best progress and build most enduringly if we first find out the truth about our history and our institutions and our relations with the rest of mankind. Critical thinking is a tonic that we need to drive us forward. Only moribund and corrupt institutions will be destroyed when they are freely subjected to open criticism. No person and no institution is too sacred to be freely and critically scrutinized. We need more leaders who will say with the author of the Declaration of Independence, "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." George Russell, earnestly desiring the creation of a great state in his country, "would regard as alien to the national spirit all who would make us think in flocks, and discipline us to an un-intellectual commonalty of belief." If we destroy the deliberative freedom of individuals, we destroy the possibility of the formation of a normally progressive public opinion. What passes for public opinion will be an artificial refraction of the opinion of the dominant group. Progress can then come only within the dominant group or by revolution.

XIV

PUBLIC OPINION IN WAR TIME

THE story of public opinion in time of war is the story of opinion regimented and directed toward a single end with a thoroughness and a precision unknown, to democracies at least, in time of peace. In a modern war, an elaborate organization is established for the purpose of directing public opinion and making the most effective use of all the channels of communication. The other side must be pictured as the aggressors, and hate marshalled against them. Allies must be won and kept, while the enemy is demoralized if possible, and morale is kept up at home. Meanwhile, the councillors of state who move the pawns in the high chess game of international politics may be bargaining with one another and making realistic arrangements for the division of spoils that will come to the winners. But the masses who fight and sacrifice will be reluctant to fight only for national spoils. They must be fired with an ideal great enough to make all their suffering seem worth while. Hence, the materialistic side of the war must be soft-pedaled until the victory is won, whereas the national manipulators of opinion play on idealism to the limit.

Modern war is not fought between armies alone, but is a struggle between whole peoples. For the duration of the struggle, the people of a nation have but one great purpose: the winning of victory. In order that the full resources of the nation may be utilized, the people must be thoroughly organized. Every individual must be fitted into the machine created. When the security and vital interests of the nation are at stake,

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there is no alternative to the vigorous prosecution of the war. Opposition is considered treasonable. Peace cannot be proposed as long as there remains a possibility of victory and the national interests seem to depend upon success. The government must mobilize opinion as it mobilizes men and money and materials.

A compelling passion must dominate the people, taking hold of individuals with such force that they will be willing to sacrifice themselves for the nation, ready to fight if called upon, or to work at any necessary task without question of wages, hours, or profits. Things that are of primary importance in time of peace—material comforts, personal liberty, the sacredness of life—are subordinated to the winning of the war. The mere declaration of war brings a patriotic wave, but the spirit necessary to bring about the required unity and make possible the successful mobilization of the nation's full strength will not spring up spontaneously. It must be skillfully kindled by thorough and unceasing organization work on a national scale. All the channels of communication available in the modern world must be kept constantly in use, in order that every individual, whether he lives in a great city or in a village or on a farm, will be reached by propaganda day after day and week after week, "if the whole national crowd is to be wrought up to the required white heat."¹

During the World War, the technique of control over public opinion was developed to a high degree of efficiency. Since then, the dictatorships have perhaps improved the process, through their continuing use in time of peace of the same technique that all countries use in war time. The next great war will employ all of the devices that fertile minds have discovered and experience anywhere has demonstrated useful.

¹ Martin Conway, *The Crowd in Peace and War*, 301, 302. Longmans, Green & Company.

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During the World War, control over public opinion was exerted through two main channels: censorship and propaganda. Censorship was designed to prevent the enemy from getting information that might prove useful to them and to prevent the people of the home country from getting information that might lower their morale. Censorship was a negative force, and although it was of considerable importance, the positive force of propaganda was more important. Propaganda was of different types, sometimes appealing to reason, sometimes wholly to the emotions. Falsehoods of various kinds were used on a large scale when they seemed likely to prove helpful. Psychological factors are considered just as important as military factors in modern wars, and the successful manipulation of opinion just as important as the successful manipulation of soldiers and munitions.

The mechanics of communication in our time makes possible the instant dissemination throughout a whole nation of news, ideas, and opinions. The propagandist can reach men of every condition and every type of mind if he can afford to spend the money and the effort. The facilities are available. In time of war, the government is the propagandist and the expenditure is considered worth the cost. Telegraph, cable, telephone, cheap newspapers, moving pictures, and the radio are all called into play. The radio has become one of the most important instruments in shaping public opinion since the World War. The dictators have demonstrated the uses to which it will be put when war comes again. When the government controls all the channels of communication, it is easy to manipulate mass psychology.

In normal times, political decisions on important questions in a country where popular government exists are arrived at after full and free discussion has shown what is the preponderating opinion of the people. In time of war, when a nation is utiliz-

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ing its every resource, the processes of peace are disrupted, only one opinion is tolerated, and discussion is limited. Although the Constitution of the United States provides that Congress shall make no law "abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press," speech and press have both been seriously limited when the country was at war. During the Civil War, newspapers were censored and suppressed and editors and speakers imprisoned, often without trial, for criticizing the government. During the World War, Congress made illegal the expression of disloyal sentiments, or abuse of the government or its officials, as well as the expression of opinions calculated to interfere with the recruiting or enlisting services of the United States. Under the Espionage and Sedition acts, more than nineteen hundred prosecutions were made. Newspapers and magazines were suppressed, sometimes for criticizing men or measures only remotely connected with the winning of the war. The Supreme Court has said, "The Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and in peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances."² But it has also held that many things which might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to the national effort in war time that they cannot be regarded as coming under the protection of any constitutional right.³ When the nation is at peace, the individual has a right to criticize the government and its policies. The proposal of an alternative is legitimate. After war has been declared, criticism of the important policies of the government is considered treasonable.

Since political parties exist for the purpose of giving effective expression to differences of opinion among the people, war brings about a condition that makes their normal functioning

² *Ex parte Milligan*, 4 Wallace, 120, 121 (1866).

³ *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U. S. 47.

seem undesirable. To a certain extent, politics is adjourned for the duration of the war, while the nation concentrates its power on the common object of men of all parties. During the World War, Democrats and Republicans in the United States threw themselves alike into the work of winning the war. In England, a coalition ministry was formed. In France and in Germany, there were patriotic unions that temporarily wiped out party lines. Men of all parties were called into service.⁴

The use of propaganda for the achievement of desired ends is not an invention of modern times. Erasmus observed in his time "artful insinuations, watchwords, and nicknames, cunningly thrown out in debates, pamphlets, and journals."⁵ Napoleon was a master at the art. On one occasion, he suggested to one of his officials, "It is advisable that the tone of the newspapers be supervised to the end that they attack England in regard to her manners, her customs, her literature, and her constitution."⁶ Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine were firebrands whose propaganda helped to bring on the American Revolution and carry it to a successful conclusion. Benjamin Franklin was one of the earliest, as well as one of the most successful, American propagandists abroad. He caught the imagination of France and made himself the darling of the social circle and the friend of scientists and philosophers, while his picture and his image carved on ornaments and snuff boxes were spread all over the country. He became almost an institution to the French. All the while, he kept French aid coming to the Americans. During the Civil War, Thurlow Weed, one of the North's outstanding journalists, Senator Evarts, a

⁴ See A. Lawrence Lowell, *Public Opinion In War and Peace*, 236, 237. Harvard University Press.

⁵ Quoted in James D. Squires, *British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917*, 3, 4. Harvard University Press.

⁶ Quoted in James D. Squires, *British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917*, 5. Harvard University Press.

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great constitutional lawyer, and Henry Ward Beecher, one of the most eloquent ministers of the time, were sent to England, where they did propaganda work for the cause of the Union. The propaganda work done in modern wars is distinguished from that of past ages not so much in its basic nature as in the magnitude of its scope and in the elaborateness with which it is organized.

The English were among the most successful propagandists of the World War. They established a bureau for dissemination of propaganda soon after the war began. Books, pamphlets, and speeches designed to influence opinion were produced and distributed throughout the Empire and the rest of the world. The propaganda authorities assisted in placing the proper kind of articles and interviews in newspapers of many countries, with particular attention to the United States. Cartoons, photographs, and moving pictures were also widely distributed. The work in the early days of the war was done largely under cover. Even Parliament was not told much about the propaganda organization or the range of its activities. When Lloyd George became Prime Minister, a Department of Information was formed to consolidate and centralize propaganda work. The department contained four subdivisions, the original organization for the production and distribution of books and pamphlets on the war, a motion picture division, a Political Intelligence Department, whose work was to gather evidence on world public opinion, and a News Department, which dressed up the facts to be presented to the public. Finally, in 1918, a further reorganization took place, when the Department of Information was replaced by a Ministry of Information headed by Lord Beaverbrook, one of the country's most powerful journalists.⁷

⁷ James D. Squires, *British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917*, 28-39. Harvard University Press.

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In the United States, a Committee on Public Information was appointed by the President soon after this country entered the war. It was composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and Mr. George Creel. Mr. Creel was the person actually responsible for all aspects of propaganda work. However, the committee device gave to it something of the prestige of the three great departments whose heads were officially associated with him. This organization remained substantially unchanged throughout the war. The Committee printed some thirty booklets and circulated seventy-five million copies of them in the United States and abroad. Tours of French and Belgian soldiers were arranged. War conferences were held. Seventy-five thousand volunteer speakers were organized as Four Minute Men and made more than 700,000 speeches in 5,200 communities. The press was supplied with articles. War exhibits were placed in state fairs, and inter-Allied war expositions were organized. Propagandist moving pictures were used, and they proved to be commercially successful. More than two hundred thousand stereoptican slides were distributed. Missions were sent abroad to spread American propaganda in important districts. The cost of the whole program, according to Mr. Creel, was approximately \$4,900,000, and \$2,800,000 was earned to be applied on expenses.⁸

The government should place the ablest man available at the head of the propaganda machine that it establishes to mobilize opinion for the war. He not only should be charged with the execution of policy, but should also be consulted in its formation. Drawing a parallel from peace-time propaganda, we note that from the time when the Democratic party engaged Mr. Charles Michelson as permanent publicity director, he was con-

⁸ Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 211, 212. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

stantly consulted on important matters of party strategy and his voice was allowed to carry great weight. His contribution to the Democratic landslides of 1932 and 1936 deserves to rank with those of President Roosevelt and Chairman Farley. The fundamental principles of the propaganda of war are the same as those of propaganda in peace time. The professional propagandist keeps in close touch with the currents of opinion, and his knowledge in that field should be used to the fullest extent by the heads of the government if they wish their policies to be most successful. If the chief of propaganda is not actually a cabinet member, he should be consulted and heeded as though he were.

There is not much doubt that newspaper men generally make the best propagandists, because they are trained to handle one of the most important channels of public information. They must know what kinds of information the people want and what will be the effects of different approaches to the mind and emotions. If they do not know these things, they are not good journalists. Certainly, military men are not skillful propagandists. Their training and background make it difficult for them to understand the civilian point of view, and it is the civilians who ultimately determine important policies. The ineptness and the blundering nature of the German propaganda of the World War can be traced, partially at least, to the influence of the military men. The Germans lacked tact and finesse. Apparently they utterly failed to comprehend what an effect their invasion of Belgium, the shooting of civilian snipers, and the execution of Nurse Cavell would have on the civilian mind in neutral countries. If they did have any idea of what the result would be, they failed to realize the importance of such opinion. They were thinking in terms of what was justified by military conditions. They did not know then that public opinion is more important than armies. A first-class journalist

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in charge of propaganda would have done them more good than a Hindenburg in the field.

Any well-organized war machine makes use of various devices in the dissemination of propaganda. That the propaganda need not convey the truth is a principle generally recognized. This is illustrated by the instructions that the British War Office gave when asking officers to supply articles and stories for propaganda purposes showing the good qualities of British soldiers and the bad qualities of the Germans. The directions included the statement: "Essential not literal truth and correctness are necessary. Inherent probability being respected the thing imagined may be as serviceable as the thing seen."⁹ Similarly, a German propaganda official said on one occasion, "It is not so much the accuracy of the news as its effect that matters."¹⁰

Mr. Arthur Ponsonby has published, in his *Falsehood in War-Time*, a collection of lies used in various countries. He has not only collected but sorted and classified them. He lists the following kinds of lies as being among those commonly used: the deliberate official lie meant to delude the folks at home or deceive the enemy, the deliberate lie invented by an ingenious individual, the lie heard and passed on although evidence is lacking, the mistranslation, the general obsession started by rumor and aggravated by repetition, the deliberate forgery, the omission of passages from official documents, deliberate exaggeration, concealment of truth, and the faked photograph.¹¹ The masses of the people on whom such falsehoods are used are, of course, unaware at the time that they are being misled, and as long as that is so, falsehood may be just as effective as truth in bringing about the desired reaction.

⁹ Ralph Haswell Lutz, "Studies of World War Propaganda 1914-33," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. V (1933), 511.

¹⁰ Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in War-Time*, 168. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 19-21.

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While the patriotic citizen assumes that his own country is fighting for a righteous cause and that its department of "Information" is spreading facts, it is wise for the propagandists to create the impression that the enemy is conducting a campaign of lies. If the people accept this idea, they will assume that any reports unfavorable to their cause are enemy propaganda, and brand them as false. Thus, a psychological censorship is established and a barrier is built designed to keep out of individual minds the kind of information that the government wishes kept out.

During a war, the country's entire population must engage in many activities that have a vital bearing on its conduct. Men must be enlisted for the army. Red Cross funds must be raised and workers recruited. A vast amount of money must be obtained by the government through the sale of bonds. Food and fuel and other essential commodities must be conserved. These things cannot be done simply by the issuance of governmental orders. The whole people must co-operate, and the way to insure their co-operation is by the successful use of propaganda. During the World War, the United States was flooded with posters, some of them designed by the country's outstanding artists, appealing for money for Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Y.M.C.A., and urging the conservation of essential materials and generally stimulating war activities. Other countries were similarly placarded. Ministers in the churches, teachers in the schools, and speakers addressing various gatherings urged support for the activities of the war while they stirred up hate against the enemy in order to maintain the morale necessary to make the people sacrifice for the cause.

Modern nations cannot muster the necessary support from their citizens, when they go to war, unless the war is made to appear one of self-defense. The public opinion of the world

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must also be considered—and the world frowns on the aggressor. It follows, then, that the other side must always be the aggressor.

During the World War, when Lord Northcliffe headed the British propaganda agency, he held that the Allies must never stop "insisting that they were the victims of Aggression." In 1914, *The Times* of London stated that Germany had "deliberately brought on the crisis which now hangs over Europe," Mr. Asquith declared that the sole responsibility rested with Germany, and Mr. Lloyd George told his people they were fighting "to defeat the most dangerous conspiracy every plotted against the liberty of nations, carefully, skilfully, insidiously, clandestinely planned in every detail with ruthless, cynical determination."¹² A similar view was generally accepted in the other Allied countries. The German invasion of Belgium and France made such an appeal particularly effective in those countries.

The Germans, on the other hand, at first blamed Russia as the aggressor. Later, the guilt of England was also stressed. All the various political factions united in condemning the "czarism" and "barbarism" of the Russians, but not always for the same reasons. The conservatives had looked with favor on "czarism" before the War and had condemned the radicals who opposed it. When the War began, they all joined in the chorus against it. According to the German *White Book*, the nation's aims were threefold: to save the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, to maintain the Teutonic position in Central Europe, and to defend Germany against Russia. The Kaiser stressed Germany's obligation to defend her ally, and said too that Germany's purpose was not one of conquest but the maintenance of the place that the country had already attained.¹³

¹² Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in War-Time*, 57, 58. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc.

¹³ Ebba Dahlin, *French and German Public Opinion on Declared War Aims 1914-1918*, 14, 20, 21. Stanford University Press.

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More recently, when the Japanese troops invaded China, public opinion in neutral countries generally considered Japan the aggressor, but the Japanese insisted strenuously that they were merely defending themselves. A pamphlet published by the publicity department of the South Manchuria Railway Company for propaganda purposes said, "Since the outbreak of hostilities at Lukowkiao, the last of the chain of China's deliberate provocations directed against Japan, China's huge armies have been pouring into North China to reenforce the notorious 29th Army already in action against the surprised Japanese forces with only one-tenth of their strength. Japan's effort for amicable solution through diplomatic channels and her non-aggrandizement policy were thus ruthlessly frustrated and, after numerous disappointing experiences of the past several years, she has determined to launch a general offensive campaign as the last resort."¹⁴ A pamphlet published by the National League of Japanese University Professors insisted that the Japanese policy toward China had aimed only at the maintenance of friendship, whereas the Chinese were alleged to have "adopted a pro-Communistic policy, and heaped outrages against Japan, thus forcing the latter to unsheathe her sacred sword." And a little later, "The present Japan conflict was first courted by China and was taken up purely as a matter of self-defence on the part of Japan. The fault lies entirely on the side of China."¹⁵

When a nation is at war, complex explanations of war guilt are not wise from the standpoint of the propagandist. Neither are they popular with the people. It is much easier to fight and sacrifice if the guilt is clear and it is all on the other side. A judicious analysis of underlying factors would weaken enthusiasm and perhaps raise doubts as to whether or not the whole venture was justifiable.

¹⁴ *The China Incident and Manchoukuo*, 1.

¹⁵ *The Japan Conflict and the Attitude of Japan*, 23-6.

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While the other side is being pictured as the aggressor, it is good policy for the nation's leaders to state the aims of their side in such a way that the people will feel that they know clearly for what they are fighting and that it is worth while. President Woodrow Wilson demonstrated the wisdom of such a policy during the World War better than anyone else had ever done it. He became the spokesman of the Allies both to their own peoples and to the world. He expressed in masterful language the highest aspirations of all humanity. He made the war a holy war of democracy and justice and reasonableness against autocracy and injustice. The idea that "the world must be made safe for democracy" gave stimulus to the tremendous efforts that were being made to defeat the Central Powers. In the famous "fourteen points," he said, among other things, that the United States was fighting for "open covenants of peace openly arrived at," freedom of the seas, equality of trade conditions, adjustment of colonial claims with consideration being given to the interests of the people involved, evacuation of invaded Allied territory, and the establishment of an association of nations to afford a mutual guarantee. The aims seemed so reasonable that they consolidated popular support of the war, particularly in the United States, while at the same time they had a demoralizing effect on the Germans. We may conclude that it is fully as important that the aims of a country be made to seem clear and just as that the actions and intentions of the other side be made to seem unreasonable and aggressive.

War is a terrible and revolting business to the peoples of a democracy. In order to throw themselves into it with the necessary enthusiasm, they must learn to hate the enemy. Killing the greatest possible number of the enemy in the shortest possible time is the job to be done. Men will have no stomach

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for such a job if they love their enemies. The assiduous cultivation of hate then becomes a task of prime importance to the manipulators of patriotic opinion. One writer describes the goal to be attained when, speaking of the American people during the World War, he says: "We thought, planned, dreamed and prayed in terms of slaughter. Nothing else was important. It was an ideal that drew us together. We hated with a common hate that was exhilarating."¹⁶ That President Wilson foresaw this and dreaded it is indicated by a remark that he made to Frank Cobb, editor of the *New York World*, at one o'clock on the morning of the day that he was to ask Congress to declare war. The President, worn and sleepless, was trying to see if there was even then any possible way of avoiding war. "To fight," he said, "you must be brutal and ruthless, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life. . . ." ¹⁷ The very fact that whole peoples take part in modern wars makes hate both desirable and inevitable during the war. It is fuel that keeps the engine running.

Vilification of the enemy, or, as Professor Lasswell calls it, satanizing the enemy, is a technique used to develop a safe margin of hatred. Name-calling is an ancient and respected device for vilifying the enemy. In the American Revolution, for instance, Thomas Paine strengthened the patriot cause by writing in *The American Crisis*, "Every Tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave." During the Civil War, the Union soldiers kept up their morale by singing about the enemy:

¹⁶ Raymond B. Fosdick, "America at War," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. X (1932), 322.

¹⁷ Henry F. Pringle, "The Newspaper Man as an Artist," *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. XCVII (1935), 106.

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"Oh, perish, ye traitors and knaves,

"Ye changers of men into slaves,

"Ye Rebels, so craven and base—" ¹⁸

During the World War, German newspapers and speakers continually referred to Russia as a barbaric country and called the people "Cossacks" and "Tartars," and their political system a medieval despotism. Meanwhile, the Allied peoples were calling the Germans "Huns," "barbarians," "Boches," and similar evil sounding names. Such names help to build a satan-like stereotype of the enemy.

Probably the most effective of all devices for arousing hate against the enemy is the atrocity story. Certain standard patterns have proved particularly effective. As Professor Lasswell suggests, the wounding of women, children, old people, priests, and nuns, the mutilation of prisoners and non-combatants, and sexual offenses, can always be stressed.¹⁹ The enemy must be made to seem cruel and degenerate, and atrocity stories of this nature build such a picture of them in the minds of the people.

Pope Urban made use of this technique in 1095 when, in the course of an address to a council of French prelates and nobles at Clermont, he said:

From the borders of Jerusalem and the city Constantinople ominous tidings have gone forth. . . . An accursed race . . . has invaded the lands of the Christians in the east and has depopulated them by fire and steel and ravage. These invaders are Turks and Arabs. . . .

These Turks have led away many Christians, captives, to their own country; they have torn down the churches of God everywhere, or used them for their own rites. . . . The invaders befoul the altars with the filth out of their bodies, they circumcize Christians and pour

¹⁸ Frank Moore, *Songs of the Soldiers*, 216. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

¹⁹ Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 81,2. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

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the blood of the circumcision upon the altar or into the baptismal fonts. They stable their horses in these churches, which are now withdrawn from the service of God. . . .

Even now the Turks are torturing Christians, binding them and filling them with arrows, or making them kneel, binding their heads, to try if their swordsmen can cut through their necks with a single blow of a naked sword. What shall I say of the ravishing of women? . . . You, in France, have heard the murmur of agony on the border of Spain. The time may come when you will see your wives violated and your children driven before you as slaves, out of the land.²⁰

The pope and various itinerant preachers toured France and aroused so much enthusiasm that contemporaries thought it could be explained only as evidence of divine assistance. A great crusade was organized and, in spite of many difficulties, Jerusalem was taken in 1099. When they took the city, the crusaders spent the day killing men, women, and children indiscriminately. In the evening they went "sobbing with joy" to worship at the sepulcher of the Prince of Peace. It was a monumental testimony to the successful mobilization of hate.

During the World War, all the countries involved were flooded with atrocity stories of all kinds. In any war there are likely to be all too many atrocities actually committed, for war is not a pink tea affair, but the business of the propagandist is to create the impression that the barbarous acts are all committed by the other side, and that they are typical of the other side.

One of the stories most widely circulated in all the Allied countries was that the German soldiers were cutting off the hands of Belgian children in order that there could be no Belgian soldiers in the future. *The Times* of London quoted "witnesses" who had "seen" such acts committed. Pictures of a child without hands were circulated in France and Italy. Ap-

²⁰ From Harold Lamb, *The Crusades Iron Men and Saints*, 39, 40. Copyright 1930, reprinted by permission from Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

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parently the lie was made out of whole cloth, for no such child was ever found, but it was widely believed during the war. Other stories told of the crucifixion of a Canadian officer by the Germans, of violated and mutilated women, and of the German corpse factory where bodies of dead German soldiers were boiled down to oil to be used for munitions and for pig food. The French had a large five-story building called *La Maison de la Presse*, where they manufactured photographs showing cut-off hands, torn-out tongues, and other "evidence" of German frightfulness. The Germans, on their side, did not neglect the atrocity story. Among others, the French were accused of attempting to infect a well at Metz with cholera germs, Belgians of treacherously murdering German soldiers, and the Russians of habitually cutting off men's arms and legs and mutilating women.

There is likely to be a considerable variation in the form of the atrocity account and in the way in which it is propagated. A victim may publish his own story, a neutral eye-witness may write of what he has seen, an enemy confession may be published, or some other device used. The British used excellent strategy when they created a commission composed of men with international reputations for reliability to collect evidence and make a report. This so-called Bryce Commission published an impressive report known as *The Evidence and Documents laid before the Committee on Alleged German Outrages*. The report had its effect on the United States as well as England. Atrocities were lifted from the realm of hearsay to the lofty heights of scientific accuracy—so it seemed.

When human beings are giving themselves over to hate they tend to seek a personal devil. An individual can be assigned diabolical traits and hated with more definiteness than a whole people. That masterful document of propaganda, the American Declaration of Independence, contains two pages of

charges against the king of England, concluding with the statement, "A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free People." And Thomas Paine wrote in his inflammatory *American Crisis*, ". . . I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he." In the Civil War, northerners sang cheerfully of hanging Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree. The World War found its personal devil in the Kaiser. He was called the "mad dog of Europe," "a barbarian chief," a "madman," and personally blamed for the burning of cities, the murdering of men, women, and children, and all the other sins laid at the door of his people. The fiction of the Kaiser's responsibility became so generally accepted that it found expression in the Peace Treaty at the close of the war in the statement, "The Allied and Associated Powers publicly arraign William II, of Hohenzollern, formerly German Emperor, for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties."

Propaganda should not be confined to the home country alone. Efforts should be made to win the favor of public opinion in neutral countries in order to get them into the war, or to keep them from helping the other side, or perhaps simply to win their moral support. The technique was illustrated in the propaganda activities of the European belligerents in the United States before this country entered the war. The propagandists effectively appealed to old loyalties, to genuine sympathies and emotions of the American people, to common social and racial ties. They could not buy the kind of support they wanted. It had to be won. Certain Americans of influence gave enthusiastic aid to the process. Ambassador Page, representing the United States in London, kept the mails busy carrying letters to President Wilson and other Americans urging that

the United States get into the war on the side of the Allies. A prominent American in Paris in 1914 told a French historian that there were then perhaps fifty thousand Americans who believed that the United States should join the Allies immediately, and more than a hundred million who were opposed to such action. "Our duty," he said, "is to reverse these figures so that the 50,000 may become 100,000,000."²¹ The Allied propagandists, with the co-operation of such Americans, set out to accomplish that task.

British propaganda was particularly successful. French propaganda was too transparent. The Germans, on the other side, failed to understand the American psychology and succeeded only in blundering into a position where they could be accused of spreading invidious propaganda—as though they were the only ones engaged in the activity. The methods of the British illustrate the most effective technique. Sir Gilbert Parker, a Canadian by birth, was entrusted with the work of winning the American public. He had traveled widely in the United States, and made many personal friends. When he was given his propaganda assignment, he made a careful analysis of American press opinion on the war, and followed that with an equally thorough investigation of opinion in American colleges and universities. As a result of these studies and a careful reading of *Who's Who*, he prepared an American mailing list for the distribution of British propaganda literature. The material always went out with Sir Gilbert's card enclosed, and sometimes accompanied by a well-phrased letter, never with any mention of the British propaganda bureau. He helped arrange for interviews of prominent British statesmen with American newspapers. He advised his friends and correspondents to arrange for speeches and debates by American citi-

²¹ James D. Squires, *British Propaganda at Home and in The United States from 1914 to 1917*, 43. Harvard University Press.

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zens. This was deemed better strategy than sending Englishmen to America to preach the British cause. Every effort was made to stimulate and capitalize on the feeling of the British sympathizers in America in order that the pro-British movement would seem to come from Americans rather than that it should seem to be a hothouse plant nurtured by alien "propaganda."²²

The Allied champions in America were also aware of the fact that if the people of a neutral power can be persuaded to give some kind of non-military aid to a belligerent, their sympathies toward the one helped are likely to be increased. A great campaign was waged in America to secure assistance for Belgian widows and orphans. One of the instruments of propaganda used was a pamphlet called *The Need of the Belgians*, which had been prepared by a group of distinguished literary stars, among whom were Thomas Hardy, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, and George Bernard Shaw.²³ Since the World War, campaigns have been waged to secure money for medical aid and relief work for the Chinese and for the warring people in Spain. Such campaigns usually evidence an already existent sympathy, but they also increase sympathy for the party that is being helped.

During the World War, the importance of inter-allied propaganda was recognized. Soon after the United States entered the war, Great Britain sent a special mission, headed by Mr. Balfour, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, to the United States to give the United States the benefit of England's three years of war experience and to bring the English statesmen into closer touch with the situation in the United States. Similar missions were also sent by France, Italy, and Belgium. All of these mis-

²² See James D. Squires, *British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917*, 50-61. Harvard University Press.

²³ Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 138. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

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sions were received with great popular enthusiasm by the American people, and the ceremonials surrounding their visit served to impress the country with the fact that the war was a co-operative affair. President Wilson had numerous talks with the delegations. He wanted particularly to arrive at an understanding regarding the tone of public statements to be issued with a view to the effect on Germany, and he wanted to find out what the British and French attitude would be toward future peace proposals.

Later, other missions of co-ordination were sent by the British and French. The British mission under Lord Northcliffe was especially important. British propaganda, which before American entrance into the war had been carried on more or less under cover, was brought into the open with the establishment of a British Bureau of Information in New York City. The work of the Bureau was varied and extensive. One of its most important achievements was the launching of a far-flung lecture campaign in the United States. Lord Northcliffe's propaganda agency in England also kept in close touch with the leaders of the American government. It was instrumental in distributing great quantities of incendiary material, including President Wilson's statements, behind the German lines to weaken German morale. Meanwhile, the American Committee on Public Information had established press agencies in Allied countries and was engaged in spreading American propaganda abroad.

While maintaining the highest possible morale at home and a close co-operation with allied peoples and governments, a nation at war also spreads propaganda intended to demoralize the enemy. Such propaganda continually hammers away at the idea that their cause is hopeless, and seeks to make the people suspicious of their allies, or encourage the discontent of groups within the country, or destroy the confidence of the people in their rulers and perhaps in their whole system of gov-

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ernment. All of these techniques were illustrated by the propaganda work carried on in enemy countries during the World War.

The Germans tried to create friction between the French and the English by suggesting that England was using France for selfish purposes. The English were alleged to have been backward in their war activities, in order that French blood would be shed instead of their own. The English were also accused of establishing themselves in Calais with the intention of remaining there. Meanwhile, the Allies were trying to separate Germany and Austria-Hungary by spreading reports in Germany that food was plentiful in Austria-Hungary while the Germans were forced to endure severe food restrictions. At the same time, the Austro-Hungarians were being told that they were only the tools of a dominating Germany.

Both the Allies and the Central Powers tried to stir up secession and separatist movements among the enemy peoples. In 1917, the British Foreign Secretary committed his government to the establishment of a Jewish center in Palestine, a proposition certain to have an appeal to the Jews of Germany. Austria-Hungary, with its heterogeneous assortment of nationalities, was particularly vulnerable to separatist propaganda. The Czechish movement was particularly cultivated. The Czech leaders, Professors Thomas Masaryk and Edward Beneš, who established headquarters in Paris, although at first treated with indifference, were later encouraged by the Allies, and their literature was dropped behind the Austrian lines. Arrangements were made early in the war to facilitate the desertion of Czechoslovak soldiers from the Austrian armies, and by the end of 1915, approximately 100,000 of them were within the Allied lines.²⁴ Polish and Yugoslav elements were also en-

²⁴ F. Lee Bennis, *Europe Since 1914*, 127-9. F. S. Crofts & Co.

couraged to throw off "the Austro-Hungarian yoke." Before the close of the war, the old empire of Austria-Hungary had disintegrated.

The Germans were not generally so successful in their attempts to encourage separatism in Allied countries. Attempts were made to arouse the Irish against the English, but they were never successful enough to cause much trouble. Attempts were also made to stir up trouble in India and other parts of the empire, and to encourage a separatist Walloon movement in Belgium, but with similarly unsatisfactory results.

Propaganda designed to overthrow the ruling classes was circulated in various countries during the War, with notably successful results in Russia and Germany. The Germans are supposed to have begun spreading revolutionary reading matter among the Russians very early in the war. Then, in 1917, they allowed the revolutionist, Lenin, to go across Germany and into Russia because they thought that he would weaken Russia by stirring up dissension. The Allies, on the other hand, made continuous efforts to bring about the downfall of the Kaiser. Pictures of the Kaiser and his sons unhurt by war were circulated, while attention was called to the sufferings of the common people. German liberals living abroad were encouraged to discuss the Kaiser's responsibility for the war.

Among the most influential sources of revolutionary propaganda were the speeches of President Woodrow Wilson, and his speeches were spread widely among the German people. They tended to create the impression that the war was being waged not against the people of Germany but against their rulers, and that the people would be given moderate treatment when they were ready to accept peace; but first they must overthrow their rulers.

In his message of April 2, 1917, asking Congress to declare war, the President said:

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We have no quarrel with the German people. . . . It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. . . . It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon . . . when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools.

. . . . We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included . . . and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and obedience.

Replying to peace proposals of the Pope in August of 1917, President Wilson referred to the German government as "the ruthless master of the German people," and declared that the word of "the present rulers of Germany" could not be accepted as a guarantee of anything permanent unless explicitly supported by conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people. When the Germans asked for peace terms in 1918, the President bluntly told them they must change their government. In a note of October 23, he said:

Feeling that the whole peace of the world depends now on plain speaking and straightforward action, the President deems it his duty to say . . . that the nations of the world do not and cannot trust the word of those who have hitherto been the masters of German policy, and to point out once more that in concluding peace . . . the Government of the United States cannot deal with any but veritable representatives of the German people who have been assured of a genuine constitutional standing as the real rulers of Germany.

Such statements as these had superlative propaganda value both at home and abroad. They undoubtedly played an important part in destroying the confidence of the Germans in their leaders and in helping to bring on the liberal revolution that followed.

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While the demoralization of the enemy is encouraged by incendiary propaganda and the reiteration of the idea that they have no chance to win, the nation's propagandists make use of the illusion of victory appeal on their own people. Men must not be allowed to grow discouraged, and they must be convinced that they have a chance to win, if their fighting spirit is to be maintained. The illusion of victory appeal may take the form of a propaganda of confidence in leaders, or of reports of heroic achievements at the battle front or patriotic support at home, or of emphasis on victories won and a minimizing of defeats and withholding casualty lists. It is not wise to lead the people to expect a quick victory. Exaggerated optimism will lead to disappointment and resentment if a quick victory does not follow. The proper technique is to stress ultimate victory. Thomas Paine illustrated the proper approach when he wrote in a dark hour of the American Revolution, "These are the times that try men's souls. . . . Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." The people must have a hope of victory that will carry them through military defeats and perhaps through years of sacrifice. When hope dies, their cause is lost:

Propaganda comes with peculiar weight when it comes from intellectuals and scholars. They can "clothe the rough tissue of falsehood" with literary eloquence, and by their reputations as men of knowledge and seekers after truth convincingly defend their country's course no matter what the reasons for its entrance into war. The conclusions of the truth-seekers vary in exact accordance with geographical boundaries. When the World War came, the most distinguished German scholars sprang to the defense of their country with enthusiastic patriotism. In the United States, a number of the great universities published "symposiums" and "war series." At the University

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of Wisconsin, early in 1918, more than four hundred members of the faculty signed a statement protesting against the alleged pro-German course of Senator Robert M. La Follette. One of Wisconsin's most distinguished professors, in a book typical of the scholarly output of the time, declared that the United States was fighting for "freedom" and for "civilization itself."²⁵ Scholars go to war just as soldiers do, and their contributions may be more valuable than the skillful manipulation of bayonets.

The churches also mobilize for war. Leading clergymen of practically all faiths can be depended upon to bless almost any war. The power of religion over the hearts of men is so great that the religious appeal may be used with great effect. The war can be made a holy war with the assumption that the nation's triumph will be a victory for righteousness. Raymond B. Fosdick illustrates the extent to which patriotism may be nurtured in a religious atmosphere when he tells of having heard a speaker, in a meeting held under the auspices of a church in New England, during the World War, demand that the Kaiser be boiled in oil when captured, and relates that the entire audience stood on chairs and screamed its approval of this demand.²⁶ When a war comes, there are likely to be a few clergymen who show a lack of enthusiasm for it. But they are not enough to have any appreciable influence. Such a man, in fact, is likely to lose his job and perhaps find it necessary to make a living by spraying trees while his wife bakes bread and sells it to the neighbors.

Behind the aura of idealism with which propaganda envelops a war, the war itself is carried on in grimly realistic fashion. The Allies of the World War told their peoples that they were

²⁵ Richard T. Ely, *The World War and Leadership in a Democracy*, 17. The Macmillan Co.

²⁶ Raymond B. Fosdick, "America at War," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. X (1932), 322.

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fighting a defensive war against a threatening autocracy. Their cause was the cause of right and justice. Behind the scenes, practical men were **thinking** of the spoils that would come with victory. Just about two weeks before President Wilson delivered his stirring message to Congress, in which he made the war a holy war for the defense of democracy and the liberation of oppressed peoples, Walter Hines Page, American Ambassador to London, a man as pro-English as any Englishman, wrote to a friend, "Think of the vast increase of territory and power Great Britain will have—her colonies drawn closer than ever, the German colonies, or most of them, taken over by her, Bagdad hers—what a way Germany chose to lessen the British Empire!" ²⁷

The governments of the Allied powers had signed treaties in 1915 and later, by which the possessions of the enemy were to be divided among them when the war was over. It was a pure and simple arrangement for the division of expected loot without any pretense of consideration for the desires of the people in the territory involved. These treaties remained secret until the Bolsheviki came to power in Russia and published the agreements, to the great embarrassment of those who were making the world safe for democracy. It is only fair to emphasize the fact that President Wilson had no share in the making of any such secret treaty and that he disapproved of them and did his best to nullify them when the treaty of peace was made. However, between the time of American entrance and the close of the war, the Allies capitalized on Wilsonian idealism and cultivated the idea that it was a war of right and justice against an enemy determined to ignore the rights of other peoples.

When a nation goes into a war of major proportions in our time, its people must support it with an enthusiasm that is

²⁷ Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page*, 219. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

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strong enough to carry them through many doubtful and anxious days. One single loyalty must dominate their attitudes and actions as long as the national interest seems to depend upon victory. Individual minds must be leased by the government for the duration of the war, and "keep out" signs posted against intruding interests. The maintenance of morale and the necessary unity cannot be left to chance or spontaneous patriotism. It must be cultivated by a national organization that reaches into every corner of the land and makes use of every technique of propaganda and every channel of communication. The elaborate organizations of the World War used the publicity knowledge and the agencies available at that time on a vast scale. Dictatorships since then have improved the technique and pointed the way toward the tactics that will be generally adopted in the next war. The elements essential to the successful conduct of war on the psychological front are: organization for propaganda, the mobilization of hate for the enemy, the maintenance of friendship with neutrals and allies, and the demoralization of the enemy—with a generous tone of idealism generally pervading every appeal.

XV

PATRIOTISM AND RADICALISM

Love your country. Your country is the land where your parents sleep, where is spoken that language in which the chosen of your heart blushing whispered the first word of love; it is the home that God has given you, that by striving to perfect yourselves therein, you may prepare to ascend to him. . . . Give to it your thoughts, your counsels, your blood. Raise it up, great and beautiful as it was foretold by our great men, and see that you leave it uncontaminated by any trace of falsehood or of servitude; unprofaned by dismemberment. Guiseppe Mazzini.

PATRIOTISM is an attitude of the individual toward his country. Because it is a powerful and almost universal attachment, those who would influence public opinion on political and social matters seldom allow themselves to forget it. Patriotism may be compounded of loyalties to ideals, symbols, a geographic area, familiar surroundings, familiar institutions, and familiar people. The modern nation is so large that the individual cannot see it all in his mind. He thinks of it in terms of his experience. A series of pictures that have grown out of educational background, home life, business and social relations, newspaper propaganda, travel, and contact with foreigners may all go into the making of patriotism. Certain common stereotypes and common loyalties bind men together, common symbols stir their emotions, and loyalty stimulates loyalty as men live together a social existence. Each may have his own picture as he thinks of the nation in terms of his own background, but each senses something profound to which he is instinctively and perhaps passionately devoted.

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Patriotism takes different forms under different conditions and with different individuals. In the democracy of ancient Greece, good citizenship meant active and conscientious participation in the affairs of government, devotion to the welfare of the community, and identification of the good of the individual with the good of the state. In our own time, patriotism may lead us in the same direction and cause us to emphasize, as the Athenians did, the importance of service to the state. We may also glory in our artistic, literary, and scientific achievements, in the ideals of our historic charters of liberty, and the work of our ancestors who opened and settled a continent. At other times, patriotism may express itself in a savagely aggressive attitude toward other peoples or in persecution of the unorthodox at home. It may be used as a façade by selfish persons who seek to further their own economic or class interests. The munitions maker, for instance, finds patriotism profitable when he can use it to obtain bigger armies and navies. The employer finds it profitable when he can arouse public hostility to his discontented employees by calling them radicals. Senators cloak themselves in patriotism and use all the symbols and slogans associated with it when, with an eye cocked toward the folks back home, they advocate isolation or trustbusting or any of the other time-tested vote-getting issues, as well as when they are sincerely working for their country's welfare. But those who use the symbols and the slogans most profusely are generally the ones for whom the gathering of votes is the chief concern. Patriotism, then, may mean devotion to the common welfare or it may serve as "the last refuge of scoundrels."

Wide disagreement exists at times as to what are the qualities that characterize the good citizen and patriot. The pacifist who obeys the laws and contributes in a wide variety of ways to the improvement of his community may have his patriotism questioned in time of war because he believes "more than some

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of us do in the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount" and refuses to march when the drums begin to roll. The advocate of generous appropriations for the army and navy will generally be classed as a patriot, while those who disagree with him may be accused of "un-American activities" and the exertion of "subversive influence." The conflict between defenders of the established economic order and the advocates of radical change is commonly pictured as one in which patriots are arrayed against "dangerous radicals." We think of radicalism as being dangerous, but we do not have the feeling that reactionism is dangerous. The conception of radicalism as more dangerous than reaction is largely an attitude of mind that has developed because conservatives have had more control than radicals and reformers over the sources of public information and a greater share in shaping public opinion. They have been in a better position to establish the qualifications for patriotism. They have found the stereotype of the dangerous radical a useful one to play on when even mildly liberal reforms were being opposed. Of course, the judgment of contemporaries in control makes up only a tentative list of patriots. Men blacklisted by one generation may be the patriot heroes of the next.¹

Nationalistic patriotism is sometimes said to be mainly an attitude of the middle classes, a bourgeois affair.² Capitalists and employers are organized into world-wide trusts and combinations. They have a community of interests that is more powerful than patriotism in shaping their actions. The munitions maker will sell to either side or to both sides, even though his country be engaged in the war. The big banker cares little whether his money is invested in Michigan, Mexico, China, or

¹ Francis W. Coker, in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. XII, 29. The Macmillan Co.

² See Pitman B. Potter, *An Introduction to the Study of International Organization*, fourth ed., 50. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

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Ethiopia if there is an assurance of profitable dividends. The propertied classes of Spain were willing to mortgage their country's resources to foreign dictators to protect their own interests. There has been some evidence that a considerable number of Frenchmen would be willing to further the cause of the enemies of France rather than see their own class interests threatened by radical democratic reforms. And Mr. Elmer Davis expressed the opinion of a great many people in both the United States and England when he suggested in 1938 that the ministers in power in England had hazarded their country's imperial interests to protect class interests and had failed to protect either.³

The workers of the world have also discovered that advantage is to be gained from international co-operation, and they have developed international organizations and a certain amount of sympathy for one another. But their organizations are not so well developed and their common loyalties not so soundly established as the organizations and loyalties of the capitalists. The skilled worker, in America particularly, is middle class in his interests, and his political attitude is often similar to that of the small business man. He is equally patriotic and jingoistic. The Communists have preached internationalism to the workers. Karl Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*, "The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got." But the events of the post-war years seem to indicate that workers are little, if any, less patriotic and nationalistic than the middle class. In Russia, an economic as well as a political order was overthrown, but the loyalty of the people to Russia as a nation seemed to be made stronger by the revolution. Labor administrations in Germany, England, and France after the World War did not impair nationalistic loyalty. The nationalism of the great body of workers in the

³ "We Lose the Next War," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 344.

United States is hardly open to question. It has been demonstrated time and again both in war and in peace.

In the struggle that constantly goes on between "patriots" and radicals for the control of public opinion, all the techniques of propaganda are constantly in use. Name-calling is a favorite device with the militant supporters of all shades of belief. Earl Browder did very well in his speech accepting the Communist nomination for the Presidency. The enemy, he said, "is Wall Street—the reactionaries, the enemies of the people. . . strong, ferocious, and unscrupulous, an octopus with a thousand poison arms." ⁴ The D.A.R. counter by calling the Communist party "foreign-inspired and alien-minded." To one patriotic writer, communism is like "a cancerous growth." ⁵

Conservatives often make use of the name-calling device to label their progressive opponents as un-American. In the 1920's, an organization in Virginia published pamphlets purporting to show that the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., public schools, and colleges were being used by the "World Revolutionary Movement" to prepare for revolution by perverting the minds of the nation's youth. One of their pamphlets listed as socialistic demands that equal pay be given to both sexes for equal work, statutes prohibiting night work for women, minimum wage laws, mothers' pensions, child labor laws, and laws requiring children of certain ages to attend school. ⁶ In the same period, a better-known organization received considerable publicity because of its "blacklists," which included the names of such supposed liberals as William Allen White, Bishop Francis J. McConnell, David Starr Jordan, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Dean Pound, of the Harvard Law School, Senator William E. Borah, and Frank Kent.

⁴ Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?*, 11. Workers Library Publishers.

⁵ Elizabeth Dilling, *The Red Network*, dedication. Published by the author.

⁶ *Parallels for Thinking Men and Women*, published by the Woman's Constitutional League of Virginia, 1926.

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More recently, a "Who is Who in Radicalism" listed as among those who had contributed in some way to the "Red movement in the United States" such varied personalities as: Grace Abbott, Jane Addams, Mrs. Louis D. Brandeis, Glenn Frank, Dr. John A. Ryan, Senator Borah, five La Follettes, Fiorello La Guardia, and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.⁷

New Deal men and measures on numerous occasions have been labeled "Red," "communistic," "fascist," and various other names designed to make the average man feel that a revolution has swept away his traditional liberties and that the country is on the brink of disaster. The New Dealers have cheerfully responded by calling their opponents "economic royalists," "reactionaries," "princes of privilege," and other names that bring an unfavorable picture to the mind of the average man. In the battle of names, the enemy is freely labeled as black when he is really only a little gray, but the citizen who is alert learns to make allowance for the technique of the crusaders.

Patriotic organizations, and the government itself, make elaborate use of symbols and ceremonies to stimulate and deepen the loyalty of individuals to the state. Nationalism has developed a ritual that is similar to the ritual of the great religions, although not so elaborate. The dictators have made most use of this device. The raised-arm salute, brown shirts, black shirts, the swastika, and pictures of Lenin are all used with great effectiveness to stir the proper emotions. Although the democracies are less elaborate in their ceremonials, and the symbols are not so ubiquitous, they too make use of these unifying devices. The flag is the chief symbol of faith and the most vivid sign of a common loyalty. It is treated with a ritualistic respect that emphasizes its sacredness. There are specified forms for saluting, "dipping," lowering, and "hoisting" the flag, and hats are removed when it passes by. All over the

⁷Elizabeth Dilling, *The Red Network*. Published by the author.

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United States, thousands of school children are required to recite daily with ritualistic gestures the pledge of allegiance to the flag "and to the country for which it stands."⁸

National holidays, pictures, parades, mass demonstrations, impressive public buildings, and stirring music arouse enthusiasm or impress the individual with his country's power. Songs such as "America," "God Save the King," and the "Marseillaise" stir deep emotions. The "Marseillaise," said Carlyle, "will make the blood tingle in men's veins; and whole Armies and Assemblages will sing it, with eyes weeping and burning, with hearts defiant of Death, Despot and Devil." National heroes become the saints of the religion. A six-year-old Presbyterian who said to his shocked father, "George Washington is God," demonstrated by the dubiety of his Calvinism both the orthodoxy of his patriotism and the extent to which the effective emphasis on symbols may influence the concepts of youthful minds.

Patriotic individuals and organizations from time to time stimulate the observance of nationalistic ritual and urge its extension. In 1929, the officers of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Indiana protested against the use of red ribbon for tying the bills passed by the legislature. In 1935, the New Jersey branch of that organization passed a resolution urging Congress to require by law that all federal buildings fly the American flag "every day in the year except Sundays and in stormy weather." They charged that many government buildings were not flying the flag at that time because of "insidious propaganda." In 1936, a New York assemblyman introduced a bill that would have required all school buses to be painted red, white, and blue. This bill failed to pass, but a short time later the legislature did pass a bill that required the display of the flag in school assemblies. In a considerable number of

⁸ Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism*, 107-8. The Macmillan Co.

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states, school children are required to recite daily the pledge of allegiance to the flag and salute it.

Some doubt has been cast upon the value of compulsory and frequent ritual. Mr. William McAndrew suggests that when the pledge of allegiance to the flag is gone over repeatedly, it is likely to become a meaningless ceremony. Some children have been found to be saying the wrong words. They get the tune, but the words might as well be a string of nonsense syllables so far as their meaning is concerned. Psychologists have asserted that the daily flag salute actually increases indifference instead of destroying it.⁹ The question has been raised as to whether or not attempts to force flag observance upon school children or everyday citizens is compatible with democracy. American citizens are thrilled by their flag, it stirs deep emotions within them, because they love it, not because they are compelled to display it as though they lived in a dictatorship.¹⁰ Perhaps, after all, allegiance in a democracy can best be obtained by the development of loyalties that grow from within rather than by the compulsion of adherence to outward forms.

There seems to be a natural tendency in matters of patriotism, as well as in religion, for men to emphasize increasingly details of ritual that should be secondary in importance. The symbol becomes sacred itself instead of merely the representative of something sacred. Thus, we may find loyalty to a "fuehrer," or to a monarchy stressed more than loyalty to the state. In our own country, the Supreme Court in some minds is more sacred than the administration of justice. In one or two eastern states, school children not yet in their teens have been expelled from school when they refused to salute the flag because the religion of their parents forbade obeisance to images. The in-

⁹ William McAndrew, "Comments on Things Educational," *School and Society*, Vol. XLII (1935), 787.

¹⁰ Samuel Paul Piner and Victor Weybright, "Our Flag is Still Here," *Survey Graphic*, Vol. XXV (1936), 367.

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ner loyalty of the children to their country became of no consequence, outward conformity to a specific ritual was all important. When such a condition is reached, the state, like the church, needs a revival that will cleanse it of dead formalities and bring back the realities that command spontaneous allegiance from the hearts of men.

Patriotic organizations have not lost sight of the importance of the development of the desired attitudes and the desired traits of citizenship in children and young people. "Those who build for the future must build youth," declared the president-general of the D.A.R. in 1936.¹¹ With that in mind, she called upon the local chapters of her organization to develop a summer youth program to combat communism. The D.A.R. for a number of years have paid particular attention to the public schools because of their strategic importance in shaping the lives of children. Teachers' Oath laws have been advocated as a device for keeping "un-American" teachers out of the schools. Textbooks have been scrutinized with a view to the elimination of those containing material critical of existing American institutions or the heroes of the past. The Children of the American Revolution is a subsidiary organization of the D.A.R., whose purpose is to promote the celebration of patriotic anniversaries, hold the American flag sacred above all other flags, and develop love for American institutions. It also fights communism and takes part in patriotic exercises in the community.

The American Legion has for some time promoted a program of Americanism that stresses education and youth activities. Awards are given in schools to encourage the development of citizenship qualities in boys and girls. The study of the Constitution, flag education, and the development of a sense of civic responsibility are encouraged. In many communities, Boy Scout troupes are sponsored by Legion Posts.

¹¹ *New York Times*, June 21, 1936.

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The Legion also helps in the enrollment of candidates for Citizens' Military Training Camps and encourages the maintenance of R.O.T.C. units in high schools and colleges.¹²

One of the best organized and most effective of the organizations designed to promote patriotism among young people is the Boy Scout movement. Boys are attracted to it by the uniforms and pageantry, by the opportunity for good times out of doors, and by the sense of responsibility and importance that participation brings them. The Scout is urged to do good turns and be helpful to other individuals. He is taught to give unselfish service to the community and to the nation. In order to prepare the Scout for more intelligent citizenship, the Scout program includes instruction in both the mechanics and traditions of American government. Pageantry is provided by pilgrimages to spots connected with the lives of great Americans or important historical events in the nation's history. National holidays and the birthdays of great men are observed with colorful ceremony. Instruction on the history of the flag and the respect due it is given to every Scout. Boys learn to take pride in participating in ceremonies and showing the prescribed forms of respect for the flag. In order that such ceremonial expressions may not degenerate into meaningless formalities, scoutmasters are urged to keep the *spirit* of patriotism alive by giving it concrete opportunities for expression in useful service to the community.¹³

The Communists also are keenly aware of the importance of a program designed to appeal to children and young people. In his report to the convention of the Communist party in 1936, Earl Browder, the party's General Secretary, said, "Who wins

¹² "Facts About the American Legion," a leaflet published by the American Legion, January, 1937.

¹³ Bessie L. Pierce, *Citizens' Organizations and the Civic Training of Youth*, 194-8, Charles Scribner's Sons.

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the youth wins the future of America.”¹⁴ Organization, activities, and literature to reach almost every age have been provided. The chief youth organizations are the Young Pioneers of America, composed of children from eight to fifteen years of age, and the Young Communist League, including young people from fifteen to twenty-three years old. The Young Pioneers is designed to educate children in the party philosophy and program and serve as a feeder for the Young Communist League. It is organized along lines similar to the Boy Scout movement, but its teachings are, of course, very different, and it is very hostile to the Scout movement, asserting that it is an agency of capitalism and militarism. Young Pioneer groups exist chiefly in the large cities. However, it is still true, as the superintendent of schools in New York City testified in 1930, that “They have been an annoyance,” but because of their small numbers, “hardly more than that.”¹⁵ The *New Pioneer* is an illustrated monthly magazine for this age group, with a subscription price low enough to permit wide circulation among poor people. It contains stories designed to make children class conscious as well as numerous features dealing with such things as baseball, science, and stamp collecting.

The Young Communist League aims to convince youth that they will be adequately provided for economically, socially, and culturally only under a communistic system. Members are expected to join in strikes, demonstrations, and other such activities of the party. Each one is expected to be a missionary and an agitator in his contacts with young workers in shops, labor unions, sports organizations, and the armed forces of the United States. In order to attract members, local organizations

¹⁴ *Democracy or Fascism*, a pamphlet published by Workers Library Publishers, 1936, 36.

¹⁵ Bessie L. Pierce, *Citizens' Organizations and the Civic Training of Youth*, 230. Charles Scribner's Sons.

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have socials, plays, dances, and other forms of entertainment. One writer suggested as part of a program for more effective work that a youth center be maintained, with a fine arts collection, a library, game rooms, and facilities for dancing, as well as for discussion groups.¹⁶ The League has furnished active leaders in the American Student Union, an organization designed to establish a "united front" of radical and liberal college students. The *Young Communist Review* is a magazine sent to all members of the League. Its editors have expressed the hope that they will soon make it "one of the best youth magazines of the country." Its articles are all propagandist in nature.

Other phases of the Communist technique for winning popular favor deserve special consideration. The Communist party in the United States is small and, in most cases, apparently futile, but it is a well-knit organization with a missionary zeal and a program that have made it the symbol of dangerous radicalism in the minds of a considerable proportion of the public.

Before the rise of the fascist dictatorships in Italy and Germany and the ascendancy of Stalin in Russia, the Communist party kept aloof from liberal organizations, as it lived and worked for the time when it would be strong enough to attain its Marxian goals by "the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." In the United States, the party made little headway because neither its program nor its tactics appealed to any considerable number of the people. In 1924, the Communist candidate for President received 33,000 votes out of a total of 29,000,000 cast. In 1928, the Communist vote was 48,700 in a total of 36,800,000. In the depression year of 1932, the Communist vote jumped to 102,900, but in 1936 it fell to 80,000. All over the world, the Communist party has changed

¹⁶ Alice Goldberg, "A More Abundant League Life," *Young Communist Review*, March, 1937, 19.

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its policy from that of "splendid isolation" in its relations with other parties to that of co-operation with democratic parties against the menace of fascism. Not only has the Communist party in the United States attempted to work with the liberal elements in American politics, but its leaders have made an energetic effort to remedy the party's weaknesses as a propaganda agency and strengthen its appeal to the common people of America.

Earl Browder shows his knowledge of the American mind, and his awareness of his party's shortcomings in propaganda technique, in realistic analysis of the weaknesses of the past and in suggestions for a present program of activity. He has declared that the central weakness of the party has been its lack of politically and technically trained leaders. One of the chief efforts of the party, therefore, must be the discovery of capable native American leaders. He suggests emphatically that the leadership of the party from top to bottom must be predominantly in the hands of native Americans. Further, every party member must be trained to become a leader among the masses and encouraged to educate and lead workers outside the party. In addition to his emphasis on adequate leadership, Mr. Browder has said that the Communist press and literature must be popularized both in content and in circulation. In his view, press and literature are the chief agency of mass education.¹⁷ The tactics and the literature of the Communist party give ample evidence that the Browder advice has been taken to heart. The party is abandoning the use of stilted European terminology and is speaking the language of Americans with all the effectiveness that the techniques of popular journalism and publicity can command. Cartoons, pictures, stories, poems, and news items bring home to the readers ideas with a vividness that they are not likely either to ignore or to forget.

¹⁷ *Democracy or Fascism*, 39-41. Workers Library Publishers.

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By 1936, American Communists were strong advocates of a united front against capitalistic fascism. Workers, farmers, and the lower middle classes should unite in defence of their immediate interests in the face of increasing threats from capitalism, it was said. A farmer-labor party based on these groups was advocated as a means of carrying the fight into the political field. Its program should include advocacy of higher wages, the right to organize, adequate relief to the unemployed and to impoverished farmers, full civic rights for Negroes, the preservation of democratic liberties, and the maintenance of international peace. It would oppose sales taxes, exorbitant utility rates, and high monopoly prices.¹⁸

In discussing the proposal for a farmer-labor party, Mr. Browder called attention to the fact that the Communists had been accused of advocating such a party because they wanted to trick the masses into revolution. This was not true, he declared. He went on to say that the masses were not yet ready to accept the full Communist program, and therefore the Communists proposed a program that the masses were already beginning to demand. Communists advocated such a party not because they were giving up the idea of revolution but because they thought that a farmer-labor movement would give the common people revolutionary education. As they came to grips with the problem of state power and the important issues of the day, they would be drawn inevitably toward the Communist program.¹⁹

In calling attention to the new strategy of Communism in connection with a New York state senator's bill to bar advocates of revolution from office, *The New York Times* of March 16, 1938, said editorially, "For if he has ever tried to pin down a Communist, it is overwhelmingly probable that the Communist

¹⁸ Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?*, 91, 92. Workers Library Publishers.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.

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has ended by saying that he does not *advocate* the violent overthrow of capitalist government but merely *predicts* it. Even this is probably more than he could get out of the average Communist in the last few years, for they are all United Front boys now, more liberal than the liberals, more democratic than the democrats, demanding civil liberties everywhere except in Russia, and opposed only to War and Fascism."

Mr. Browder, a product of the same "typical prairie state" that produced Alfred M. Landon, has shown that he knows how to use propaganda appeals long relied upon by spellbinders of the major parties. In his 1936 acceptance speech, he used such glittering generalities as "a better life," "preserve our democratic rights," "keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world."²⁰ He appropriates and makes use of the symbols of Americanism that have been traditionally favorite devices of the major parties. "Communism is the Americanism of the twentieth century," we are told. It continues "the traditions of 1776" and "the revolutionary Lincoln." The magic name of Lincoln is used again when the "diatribes" of Hearst against the party are likened to the abuse of "the great Lincoln."²¹ The Liberty League was used in the 1936 campaign as a propaganda "devil" in much the same way that the Democrats used that ill-fated organization. But the chief propaganda "devil" of the Communists was fascism, just as communism was the chief "devil" of the conservatives.

Opposed to communism, on the "patriotic" side, are numerous organizations actively devoted to the furtherance of their conception of patriotism. The membership and motives of these organizations varies from those who are unselfishly working for the welfare of their country to those who are seeking to protect their own property interests under the guise of patriot-

²⁰ Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?*, 14. Workers Library Publishers.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 12, 13, 15, 21.

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ism.²² One of the chief activities of such organizations is the dissemination of propaganda against alleged revolutionary movements. All of them agree in fighting communism. From that point they diverge, some attacking Socialists, Progressives, the New Deal, church peace organizations, and the child labor amendment, and labeling them all indiscriminately as "communistic."

On certain important contemporary political questions the patriots on the right clash head-on with liberals and radicals. Such clashes, and the accompanying propaganda used on the public, have much to do with shaping the attitudes of individuals and the stream of public opinion. For that reason, we are justified in paying particular attention to some of the subjects on which opinions diverge most sharply.

The Soviet regime in Russia has been the subject of the widest possible differences of opinion. Liberals generally viewed the great experiment with sympathy and with hope for its success, until Mr. Stalin's penchant for purging the ranks of his supporters shattered their dreams as a man with a sledge hammer might break a delicate vase. To conservatives, the Russian experiment has always been anathema. They have pictured Russia under communism as a drably dirty and dilapidated land swarming with deserted children, where soap sells for \$1.30 a bar, long trains filled with discontented individualists are constantly leaving for Siberia, high officials ride around in Rolls-Royces while ragged proletarians starve, bedbugs fill the beds, and workers labor inefficiently under trying conditions in factories surrounded by machine guns.²³ American communists, on the other hand, hailed the Russian Revolution and the establishment of communism there as "the greatest event in human

²² See Norman Hapgood, *Professional Patriots*, 3-13, Albert & Charles Boni; and Oswald Garrison Villard, "What the Blue Menace Means," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLVII (1928), 539.

²³ See Elizabeth Dilling, *The Red Network*, 9-12. Published by the author.

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history." The Soviet Union was a place "where exploitation of man by man has been ended." After the adoption of the new constitution in 1936, the Central Committee of the party in the United States referred to Russia as "the most complete democracy even seen," and praised the achievement of a constitutional guarantee to all citizens of "education, work, and leisure" as a notable achievement of rule by the working class.²⁴

When the Soviet regime was established in 1917, the United States refused to recognize it as the government of Russia, although American civilian, military, and diplomatic observers on the spot soon came to the conclusion that it would probably maintain itself in power. The refusal to grant recognition was based both upon the illegality of the assumption of power and the distastefulness of the Soviet program. When Calvin Coolidge became President, he made it clear that recognition was being withheld because of objection to the radical system that was maintained in Russia, but "whenever there appear works meet for repentance, our country ought to be the first to go to the economic and moral rescue of Russia."²⁵ By the end of the Hoover administration, this position had become untenable, and slightly ridiculous. The American and Russian delegates participated together in international conferences, and both countries adhered to the Kellogg Pact. In the Far East, both had common interests that led both to desire to check Japanese advancement and to refuse to recognize Manchukuo. With the election of President Roosevelt, a change in policy seemed likely.

Influential patriotic groups mobilized to prevent recognition. The American Legion expressed their view when the chairman of its National Americanism Commission appealed to

²⁴ *Democracy or Fascism*, a pamphlet published by Workers Library Publishers in 1936, 8.

²⁵ Malbone W. Graham, "Russian-American Relations, 1917-1933," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. XXVIII (1934), 399-400.

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Legionnaires to act as Paul Reveres to carry the alarm to the whole country, saying:

Outside of the trenches, the zero hour comes again! The barrage is the current agitation at Washington for the recognition of Communistic Soviet Russia by the United States.

.

Will you throw down the bars to foreign Communists whose theories and work are for the final overthrow, by force and violence of our government, and the substitution of a regime more dictatorial and sinister than that of all the Czars?

.

Wire or write your Senators and Representatives at Washington urging them to stand by America in this crisis.²⁶

However, when President Roosevelt did extend recognition to Russia, American public opinion seemed generally to approve it. Newspaper comment emphasized the commercial and business advantages that would result from the step, and the common sense of it.²⁷

Questions of preparedness and pacifism have given rise to extensive propaganda since the World War. The "patriotic" organizations have consistently favored preparedness, and have often denounced pacifism as un-American. They profess to believe in peace but advocate greater preparations for war. Military training in universities and high schools has been encouraged as an aid to good citizenship. Newspapers and the radio have been used to spread preparedness propaganda, but they have also been used by pacifist propagandists. The motion pictures, particularly the newsreels, have been notably devoting themselves to furthering the cause of militarism. In addition to group agitation for preparedness, individual members of

²⁶ *America Wake Up!* a leaflet published by the American Legion in 1933.

²⁷ See *The New York Times*, October 22, 1933, for the comment of different newspapers.

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patriotic societies and like-minded persons have argued for a bigger army and navy in their daily conversations with associates.²⁸

Propaganda for preparedness comes also from certain groups that profit either directly or indirectly from wars and threats of wars. In 1929, Mr. William B. Shearer, high-powered agent of the steel trust, testified before a Senate Committee that he had been with the Commander of the American Legion until three o'clock in the morning, "educating" him on national defense.²⁹ In 1936, the Senate Munitions Committee uncovered the information that the Navy League, propaganda agency for a big navy, had sought contributions from ship owners on a tonnage basis. Prominent leaders of the steel industry were members of the League. The committee discovered that secret files of the Navy General Board relating to the Washington Arms Limitation Conference were thrown open to the president of the League, who was opposing the Naval Limitation treaty of 1930. It was also discovered "That the league maintained a constant effort to achieve the publication of 'big navy' news releases in the hope of influencing editorial policy and thereby the votes cast in Congress."³⁰

Different religious and liberal groups have made pronouncements or conducted campaigns against war with varying degrees of aggressiveness. In 1933, twenty-eight national organizations interested in world peace formed the National Peace Conference. Following re-organization in 1935, the National Peace Conference emerged as the first national clearing house for peace with a program and unity of purpose adhered to by all peace organizations. Forty-two national organizations are now working through the Conference, which does not dimin-

²⁸ See Mauritz A. Hallgren, *The Tragic Fallacy*, 223-7. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

²⁹ *Chicago Tribune*, October 2, 1929.

³⁰ *New York Times*, February 11, 1936.

ish the activity of the organizations but unites their voices when they can be united into a single expression of the best thought of the country. The peace movement has achieved substantial unity and practical co-ordination of their programs through it.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America has also been active in the peace movement. A pamphlet issued by them describing techniques used by churches in social action suggests that peace plebiscites, including a course in peace education and a declaration by church members of their attitude toward participation in any war, will have both an educational value and an influence on public opinion. The Federal Council offers to send forms and detailed information in this connection.³¹ In 1936, an appeal issued by the Council to the churches throughout the United States to dedicate Armistice Day to the cause of peace advanced a program that it urged the churches to unite upon. The program included efforts "to the end of limiting American military programs 'to the defense of the continental United States'; the convening of an international economic conference 'for the peaceful modification of the control of raw materials and markets'; control of the traffic in arms by international agreement, and a study of the issues involved in the forthcoming Pan-American Conference." In making public the appeal, the president of the Federal Council said, "The time has come for the Christian thinking people of the nation to call a halt on the mad preparations for war now under way in the United States and other nations."³²

In February, 1936, it was revealed before the Senate Munitions Committee that an agent of the Navy League had on one occasion asked in a communication to League officials if the "'strategic' time had arrived for the league to 'crack down on the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America' and ex-

³¹ James Myers, *Churches in Social Action*, 16.

³² *New York Times*, November 8, 1936, II, 3.

pose 'an interlocking directorate of church organizations, Socialists and even Communists.'"³³ This led the secretary of the Federal Council to write a letter to *The New York Times*, in which he said, "It is a pity that Mr. Washburn's suggestion regarding 'cracking down' on the Federal Council of Churches came to naught. Speaking only for myself . . . it is to be hoped that these persons who are constantly talking in whispers about the alleged tie-up between the churches and communistic organizations would either make a serious effort to prove their charges or cease their irresponsible gossip." He added that the Federal Council had not received any money from the Communists.³⁴

World Peaceways is an organization that has campaigned for peace by publishing full page advertisements calling attention to the horrors of war in vivid fashion. One of their most impressive advertisements pictured a chubby baby on a butcher's block with the caption, "Nice fresh babies . . . 79¢ a pound!" The discussion under the picture called attention to the fact that several of the world's leading nations have put bounties on babies, and went on to say:

They are not hypocritical or evasive about the reason behind this golden impetus to breeding. They want more babies now for bigger armies later . . . babies to be fattened up for sixteen or seventeen years, then delivered on the hoof for slaughter!

So breed, Mother, breed for the glory of your heroic Leaders. . . . And be thankful, Mother, for your great privilege of producing a son whose destiny it is to be blown to hell!

.

But war insanity is a horribly infectious disease. And if war breaks out *any place in the world*, we'll find it terribly difficult to stay out—despite all our present high-sounding talk of neutrality.

³³ *New York Times*, February 11, 1936.

³⁴ *New York Times*, February 14, 1936.

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That's why an immediate, constant, and aggressive campaign for peace is so essential. We, at World Peaceways, are conducting such a campaign.³⁵

The conflict between pacifists and advocates of preparedness was illustrated by a news item in *The New York Times*, telling of the appeal of the Federal Council of Churches that local churches use Armistice Day as a day for the condemnation of war. The item closed with the statement, "The need for preparedness also will be stressed in the various gatherings and ceremonies being arranged by posts of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars."³⁶ Pacifists, foes of a big army or navy, and opponents of military training in colleges and high schools are not infrequently labeled as Reds by the proponents of preparedness. In *The Red Network*, the author, Mrs. Dilling, makes statements typical of this practice. She discusses pacifism, communism, and theological liberalism as though they were inextricably woven together. Christians who are pacifists are pictured as being either Communists themselves or misguided dupes of the Communists. In the background of it all is "the satanic Marx."³⁷ Interestingly enough, the united front policy of the Communist party drew it into the ranks of those favoring big navy expenditures in 1938. Mr. Browder, head of the party, denounced opponents of the Naval Expansion Bill, and Representative Maverick, one of the opponents denounced, asserted that nearly all the Communists had become big-navy advocates.³⁸ However, the fact that Reds are not pacifists will not necessarily have much influence on the practice of calling pacifists "Reds." As long as the term "Reds" creates a bad impression in the public mind, it is likely to be used by conservatives when they are fighting their liberal or

³⁵ *Pageant*, March, 1938, 2.

³⁶ November 8, 1936.

³⁷ *The Red Network*, 64. Published by the author.

³⁸ *New York Times*, March 13, 1938.

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radical brethren on the issue of armaments as well as in connection with other issues.

In the field of the relations between labor and capital, issues concerning patriotism are sometimes raised by the advocates of the established order. The right of workers to organize and bargain collectively is now recognized by law and widely approved by the public. Church leaders, both Catholic and Protestant, have repeatedly affirmed their belief in this right of the workers. The industrial leaders who control the big corporations, with a few exceptions, have usually accepted the principle of collective bargaining only when forced to do so. They fought the American Federation of Labor when it tried to unionize such industries as those in steel and automobile manufacturing. The formation of the C.I.O. led to a period of intensified struggle. Its aggressive tactics gave the opponents of unionization an opportunity to make the charges of "un-American" practices and "communism." Mr. Tom Girdler, of the Republic Steel Corporation, declared to the Senate Post Office Committee that he would never sign a written contract with the C.I.O. unless compelled to do so by law. In his formal statement he said, "We believe that the C.I.O. with its terroristic methods and communistic technique of picketing constitutes the most dangerous threat to the preservation of democracy in the United States." And, "The C.I.O. is associated with communism, many of its leaders and organizers are avowed Communists."³⁹

A comprehensive technique for strike-breaking known as the "Mohawk Valley formula" was worked out and distributed by James H. Rand, Jr., of the Remington Rand corporation, to the National Association of Manufacturers. As outlined by the National Labor Relations Board, the plan was as follows:

1. When a strike is threatened, label the union leaders as 'agi-

³⁹ *New York Times*, June 25, 1937.

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tators' to discredit them with the public and their own followers. . . . At the same time, disseminate propaganda, by means of press releases, advertisements, and the activities of 'missionaries,' such propaganda falsely stating the issues involved in the strike so that the strikers appear to be making arbitrary demands, and the real issues, such as the employer's refusal to bargain collectively, are obscured. Concurrently with these moves, by exerting economic pressure through threats to move the plant, align the influential members of the community into a cohesive group opposed to the strike. . . .

2. When the strike is called, raise high the banner of 'law and order,' thereby causing the community to mass legal and police weapons against a wholly imagined violence and to forget that those of its members who are employees have equal rights with the other members of the community.

3. Call a 'mass meeting' of the citizens to coordinate public sentiment against the strike and to strengthen the power of the Citizens Committee, which organization, thus supported, will both aid the employer in exerting pressure upon the local authorities and itself sponsor vigilante activities.

4. Bring about the formation of a large armed police force to intimidate the strikers and to exert a psychological effect upon the citizens. . . .

5. And perhaps most important, heighten the demoralizing effect of the above measures . . . by a 'back to work' movement operated by a puppet association of so-called 'loyal employees' secretly organized by the employer. Have this association wage a publicity campaign in its own name and coordinate such campaign with the work of the 'missionaries' circulating among the strikers and visiting their homes.⁴⁰

At the other extreme, as we move from economic conservatism to radicalism, we find that the Communists have taken a great interest in strengthening the militant spirit of the workers. Taking advantage of the suffering and discontent caused by the depression since 1929, the Communists have tried to make con-

⁴⁰ *Congressional Record*, August 3, 1937, 75th Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, 1950.

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verts by calling attention to the fact that millions of poor people have existed under starvation conditions, whereas others worked at low wages, lived in poor houses, and owned nothing—in a land amply rich in natural resources and industry to produce enough to enable all its people to live in happiness and abundance.⁴¹ When seventeen million workers were dismissed, one writer said in a propaganda pamphlet, the heads of corporations continued to reap profits; and although they complained of hard times, no chairman of the board of directors of any large corporation had been forced to go on the streets begging for a nickel with which to buy a cup of coffee.⁴² Earl Browder has stressed the importance of working within the labor unions. It is in the unions that workers learn “the first lessons of organization and struggle,” he says. Hence, as part of their united front program, the Communists must co-operate with every “progressive force” within the trade unions. If the workers are not organized and made into a fighting force, Mr. Browder concludes, “the advance of fascism” cannot be successfully repelled.⁴³

The report in 1931 of a committee of the House of Representatives appointed to investigate communistic propaganda discussed, in part at least, the progress of the movement with a clarity and saneness that must appeal to thoughtful opponents of communism as striking at the root of the issues involved. The report said:

Communism is making no menacing headway in America and never will so long as organized labor maintains its present attitude toward American ideals and institutions, and so long as the great body of the communist movement is made up so preponderantly of

⁴¹ See F. Brown, *Who Are the Communists and What Do they Stand For?* A pamphlet published by Workers Library Publishers.

⁴² M. J.-Olgin, *Why Communism?*, 10. A pamphlet published by Workers Library Publishers.

⁴³ Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?*, 117. Workers Library Publishers.

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men and women of foreign birth and alien tongue, in whose alien philosophies the native-born American takes little stock. . . . Communism thrives during periods of economic depression and social suffering. We have been passing through such a period . . . yet communism has made no material headway among our people. As times improve the communist movement will lose much of its impetus.

While communism presents no instant national threat, yet it is working serious and most regrettable injury here in America, especially to our foreign-born population, our school children of foreign extraction, and our industries. . . . Freedom should be the rule in America rather than restrictive legislation, and we should approach with reserve the consideration of any criminal statutes that seek to fetter the operations of the human mind or to encroach in the slightest degree on those rights guaranteed in our Constitution to the lowliest individual in the United States.

The problem of communism is bound up with our other social and economic problems. Hungry men are dangerous; but to the man with a home, a family, and a job, communism makes no appeal whatever. Communistic ideas are germs in the body politic, hostile, but harmless so long as that body maintains a healthful condition and reacts normally to human needs. They are dangerous only when the resistance of that body becomes weakened through social or selfish errors. Even then their manifestations are symptoms of something wrong rather than a disease in themselves. Sound therapy indicates an eradication of the disease rather than the symptoms.⁴⁴

The great mass of average American citizens are neither reactionaries nor radicals, but mildly conservative moderates. They are patriotic, but they do not spend a great deal of time talking about it. They are the objects of much propaganda from all sorts and conditions of men and women who seek to play upon the emotions that center around patriotism. Some of the promoters are motivated by selfish interests, some are in-

⁴⁴ *Investigation of Communist Propaganda*, 71st Congress, 3rd Session, House of Representatives, Report 2290, 96, 97, 99.

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spired by a zeal to save mankind. The outward acts of individuals that result from a play upon their patriotism may have significance for interested persons, or at any particular time may be significant for the state, but the matter of most importance for the state is the deep underlying feeling that is inside its citizens.

The deepest loyalties are those that grow in the minds and souls of men in response to high ideals. It follows that patriotism that is dynamic looks to the future as well as to the past. In the dark days of the French Revolution, when the Marseillaise came marching into Paris in response to the call for "six hundred men who know how to die," the words "liberty, equality, and fraternity" were thrilling words because a new France was in the making. The enthusiasm of the people enabled their untrained recruits to drive back the trained armies of Europe. The same spirit fired the Russians in their more recent revolution when they destroyed an evil and oppressive system and set about the work of building a new order, which they thought would end the exploitation of the masses. Similarly, in Italy and Germany the people have been given new goals to work for, and they have cheerfully made great sacrifices because they felt that they were on the march.

Men must have something to live and work for if they are to be stirred by the deepest emotions of patriotism. They must feel that they have a useful part in the life of the nation and that they are *going* toward something. Loyalties are not permanent. The state must appeal to every generation as it comes along if it is to preserve its valued institutions. There comes a time when the symbols of a great past are not enough. This is a fact of primary significance in turbulent days when democracy seems senescent before the vigorous march of the dictators. It is the prophets of a living faith, not the priests of a graven image, that command the most fervent loyalties of the people.

XVI

REPRESENTATION

IN DEMOCRATIC countries, government is recognized as an instrumentality for giving effect to public opinion. Representative government is our device for making possible popular control of public policies in a community too large for direct democracy. The people hold the supreme power, but they delegate its exercise, within certain limits, to individuals chosen to represent them. An ideal system of representation would give adequate voice to all the varied interests in the modern state and accurate expression to the major currents of popular opinion. The traditional machinery of government seems at times to fall far short of the ideal in an era when social and economic relations are becoming increasingly complex. Experiments with new types of representation have been tried in other countries and suggested in our own. And the adoption of a unicameral legislature by the state of Nebraska indicates that experiment is not impossible in the United States. Demands for the alteration of the machinery of government are inevitable when changed conditions make it an unsatisfactory agency for giving effect to the will of the people.

The use of representation as a device for authoritatively reflecting the popular will is applied chiefly to the legislative branch of the government. Strong Presidents, such as Andrew Jackson, have emphasized the position and power of the executive as the representative of the people, but they have stressed the President's representative character chiefly in connection with the part that he plays in the law-making function. The courts are even less representative in nature than the executive. We

do not hold generally to the doctrine that the courts should respond easily to currents of public opinion. However, in the United States, we do condemn them if they exercise their power to declare legislation unconstitutional with such abandon that they continue to delay the adoption of statutes for which there is a strong and persistent popular demand. We do not expect the courts to follow public opinion, except as they become important factors in the law-making process. It is to the legislature that we turn for the purest application of the principle of democratic representation, for the legislature is the chief policy-making body of the government.

John Stuart Mill declared that the meaning of representative government is that the whole people or a numerous portion of them "exercise through deputies periodically elected by themselves the ultimate controlling power, which, in every constitution, must reside somewhere." There will be little disagreement with this statement of the fundamental principle of representative government. There are, however, widely different opinions as to just what the "deputies periodically elected" by the people represent and as to how they should perform their work. A considerable number of political theorists have held that the representative should be governed by his own opinion on public issues and accept personal responsibility before the voters at election time. More widely accepted in the United States has been the view that the representative should reflect the majority sentiment of his constituency. Still another theory is that the legislator is the exponent of the "general will" of the whole political community. This is an idealistic conception, which assumes that the legislator should devote himself to the permanent and continuing interests of the state.

In the period of the American Revolution, emphasis was strongly placed on popular control of government, from a theo-

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retical standpoint. State constitutions were written embodying the doctrine "That all power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; that magistrates are their trustees and servants, and at all times amenable to them." Some constitutions contained explicit statements of the right of the people to instruct their representatives. And John Adams wrote, as late as 1808, "The right of the people to instruct their representatives, is very dear to them, and will never be disputed by me."

The Constitution of the United States was written in a period of reaction against democracy and extensive popular control of government officials, and its provisions were influenced by that reaction. James Madison spoke the mind of the Fathers when he wrote in *The Federalist*¹ that the effect of the delegation of government "is to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen, that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose." Alexander Hamilton expressed similar ideas.² He believed that the people commonly intend the public good, but do not always reason correctly about the means of promoting it. Although he thought that the republican principle demanded that the "deliberate sense of the community" should govern the conduct of political representatives, he held that "it does not require an unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze of passion" or every transient impulse of the people. "When occasions

¹ Number 10.

² *The Federalist*, Number 71.

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present themselves, in which the interests of the people are at variance with their inclination, it is the duty of the persons whom they have appointed to be the guardians of those interests, to withstand the temporary delusion, in order to give them time and opportunity for more cool and sedate reflection."

In England, the view held by many leading thinkers until comparatively recent years was that expressed by Blackstone when he wrote in 1765 that the member of the House of Commons "though chosen by one particular district, when elected and returned, serves for the whole realm," for the end of his election was not the advancement of his constituents only, but the advancement of the welfare of the nation. A distinguished former Speaker of the Commons has said, "That every Member is equally a Representative of the *whole* (within which, by our particular constitution, is included a Representative, not only of those who are electors, but of all the other subjects of the Crown of Great Britain . . . except the peers of Great Britain) has, as I understand, been the constant notion and language of Parliament." ³

Edmund Burke has been one of the most quoted of the British thinkers who discussed the function of representatives. Legislators are important individuals in his scheme of things. Although the people are the masters, the legislators are not to follow popular whims, they are to *represent* the people. The people should express their wants at large and in the rough. Representatives are expert artisans who "shape their desires into perfect form" and "fit the utensil to the use." Speaking to the voters of his Bristol constituency, Burke said that the representative cannot sacrifice his mature judgment and his conscience to his constituents. He owes not only his industry but his judgment to them. Parliament is the deliberative assembly of the nation whose end is the nation's welfare, and

³ Quoted in Robert Luce, *Legislative Principles*, 438. Houghton Mifflin Co.

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the duty of the representative is to England. Six years later he said, "I cannot, indeed take upon me to say I have the honor to follow the sense of the people. The truth is, *I met it on the way*, while I was pursuing their interest according to my own ideas." ⁴

In spite of the tendency of conservative British theorists to cling to this point of view, the tide has run steadily against it in recent years. Modern English voters do not send a representative to Parliament to exercise his independent judgment. They elect him to vote for the measures of a particular party or a particular ministry. He is the delegate of the voters in his district, and they will not hesitate to take him to task if he follows his own judgment to the extent that it leads him seriously against their wishes. Former Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald was badly beaten when he ran for re-election in his old district after having deserted the Labor party to follow a policy that he thought for the good of England but which was contrary to the desires of his constituents. If the modern representative cannot say of his relation to the popular will, as Burke did, "I met it on the way," he will meet it on the way out.

In the United States, the tendency has been toward general acceptance of the idea that the representative is a delegate to carry out the will of his constituents without too much regard for his own judgment as to what is best for them or for the country. A representative from one of the southern states expressed the attitude of many congressmen when he wrote in 1937 in reply to a query as to his stand on President Roosevelt's proposal to enlarge the Supreme Court, "I have not committed myself either way on this matter. . . . I do not feel it fair to the people I represent to jump to a hasty conclusion before first

⁴ Passages referred to in this paragraph are from "Speech on the Plan for Economical Reform," February 11, 1780 and "Speech to the Electors of Bristol," November 3, 1774. *The Works of the Right Honorable Edmund Burke*, 8th edition, Vol. II, 357, 95, 281-2. Little, Brown, and Co.

receiving a fair 'cross-section' of opinion from them, and without giving the matter careful study and consideration." The short term for which members of the House of Representatives are elected has doubtless emphasized this tendency. Any other course is not safe for the representative who wants to stay in Congress very long.

Other factors have also contributed to the development of the delegate idea of representation in the United States. We have come to assume that the representative must be a resident of the district or state that he represents, and he must look out particularly for the interests, both collective and individual, of the people who live there. He is expected to be a glorified office boy who takes care of mail promptly and runs little errands for his constituents. Uncle Joe Cannon was said to have obtained more soft jobs for his constituents than any other man in Congress in his time: Whether or not that statement was true, the principle that it implies is politically sound, and many a successful career in Congress has been based upon it.

The people's representative must not confine himself to getting jobs for his constituents, of course. If he is from a limestone district, he is expected to urge that federal buildings be built of limestone. If he is from a marble district, he must urge the use of marble. If he is from a cane-producing state, he is to favor a protective tariff on sugar and oppose a protective tariff on anything else. If his district lies upon or around a river, he will favor river and harbor improvements. A distinguished southern representative is supposed to have summed up his practice in this regard by saying, "Every time one of those Yankees gets a ham, I'm going to get a hog."

A philosophy of representation that makes the representative only the office boy of his constituents is not altogether wholesome. William H. Taft was one of those who criticized the "slavish subordination" of the representative, against his judg-

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ment, to temporary popular passions. He saw as a growing hindrance to successful popular government the disposition of politicians to coddle the people and flatter them into thinking that they can make no mistakes.⁵ When a legislative body is composed of men whose chief interest is in furthering the peculiar interests of their own districts, the tendency is to make the treasury a grab bag from which the politically strongest may grab the most.

Even though the official chosen by the people accepts the theory that the popular will should command him as an agent of the people, he may insist on definite evidence as to what that will is before he will pursue a course against his judgment. When Woodrow Wilson vetoed the Immigration Bill, January 28, 1915, he said:

If the people of this country have made up their minds to limit the number of immigrants by arbitrary tests and so reverse the policy of all the generations of Americans that have gone before them, it is their right to do so. I am their servant and have no license to stand in their way. But I do not believe that they have. I respectfully submit that no one can quote their mandate to that effect. Has any political party ever avowed a policy of restriction in this fundamental matter, gone to the country on it, and been commissioned to control its legislation? Does this bill rest on the conscious and universal assent and desire of the American people? I doubt it. It is because I doubt it that I make bold to dissent from it. I am willing to abide by the verdict, but not until it has been rendered. Let the platforms of parties speak out upon this policy and the people pronounce their wish. The matter is too fundamental to be settled otherwise.⁶

Senator Bailey, of North Carolina, expressed a similar feeling in 1937, when he was requested by the legislature of his state to support President Roosevelt's Court reform proposal on the ground that the people of North Carolina were in favor of the

⁵ William Howard Taft, *Popular Government*, 62. Yale University Press.

⁶ *Congressional Record*, January 28, 1915, 63rd Congress, 3rd Session, 2482.

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proposal. Senator Bailey admitted that public opinion was entitled to great respect. "But," he asked, "have I taken a course contrary to public opinion as duly expressed?" In answering his own question, he asserted that American government is "a constitutional representative democracy" in which "the people have developed and established the method of ascertaining the state of public opinion and informing their representatives of it," with due regard for the constitutional limitations even on public opinion. And, he continued, "This method is that of campaigns by political parties upon platforms duly submitted and passed upon by the electorate in elections frequently held. We do not guess about public opinion in America—we ascertain it at the polls." As for his own policy, he said, "I have no right in politics or morals, to violate my party's covenant or my covenant with the electorate."⁷ This is a reasonable theory, but the actual conditions of American politics are such that, coming from a practical politician, such a statement appears to be a plausible rationalization of his stand on the particular issue in question. As a matter of fact, party platforms rarely speak with the definiteness that he implies, and they do not serve as effective guides for legislation.

The election of representatives to carry into effect the public will, although the method used wherever popular government prevails, is not without defects, regardless of the method used or the theory underlying it. In any system, the individuals elected by the people may misunderstand the will of the people or they may knowingly misrepresent it. Certain features of the political institutions of the United States make it difficult for the representative either to understand the popular will, or if he understands it, to carry it into effect.

Not the least of the defects in our representative system is the lack of party responsibility that characterizes American po-

⁷ *Congressional Record*, June 14, 1937, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 7386, 7.

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litical life. The voter goes to the polls and supposedly gives a verdict for or against something. But what he has given a verdict for may be not at all clear. When he voted for a Democratic congressman in 1936, did he thereby express approval of President Roosevelt's Court reform proposal, although he did not know, when he cast his ballot, that such a proposal was coming? Did his vote express approval of the Court-slaughtered NRA or AAA? Did his vote express approval of the Roosevelt big-navy policy or the Roosevelt good-neighbor policy? A vote for a Democratic congressman in 1936 may have indicated any one of the verdicts mentioned or any combination of them, or it may have been merely an expression of personal approval for the congressman, or the vote of a regular Democrat who was at heart bitterly hostile to all that the New Deal stands for, or it may have been an expression of gratitude for a PWA job with the translated hope that the job would continue.

National parties do not act as parties responsible to the people for a definite course of action and immediately accountable to them for their accomplishments and shortcomings. Such responsibility as exists is the responsibility of the individual to his constituents, and the constituents have no very satisfactory way of judging a man on important issues. There is no coherent plan of action at the beginning of Congress, except as the President lays it down; there is no accomplished plan at the close that can be regarded as the achievement of a united party in power. The voters do not expect the party platforms to be carried out. If the President assumes a position of strong leadership and attempts to have the platform written into law, he will be opposed by members of his own party as bitterly as by members of the opposition.

If all important legislation represented the action of a party, the voters could render an intelligible verdict when they went to the polls. The English system is perhaps superior to our own

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in that regard. The laws passed by the House of Commons are the work of the majority party and the responsibility is definitely on the shoulders of the majority. The minority has no share in law-making except as it serves as critic and prosecuting attorney for the public. When the party in power seems to be no longer able to command the support of public opinion, an election is held and the voters render a decisive verdict. The government that results from such an election can proceed with its program with the knowledge that it represents the popular will.

The congressional caucus has been used at times in the past and might be used again to bring a considerable degree of unity and coherence to the party's legislative action. The caucus binds members to vote for particular measures and makes their support of such measures a test of party loyalty and the privileges of party membership. Such a procedure is subject to objections. Certainly no one would advocate making the Senate into a replica of the machine-dominated House of Representatives, and few will question the fact that the great insurgent senators have been among the most valuable members of the Senate. Insurgents serve as gadflies to keep democracy progressive and prevent the politicians of established orthodoxy from growing careless about the public welfare.

In this connection, two things are worth noting. In the first place, when there are two parties of approximately equal strength facing each other in a fairly intelligent community, the issues will tend to be clearly outlined in order that the people can make a definite choice, and the general welfare will not be neglected because an alert opposition will be ready to capitalize on such neglect. Under such circumstances, the need for insurgents tends to disappear. In the second place, insurgents are wholesome in small quantities, but too many independents lead to irresponsible government and a system of transient blocs

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that makes an intelligible popular verdict almost impossible. The most effective democratic government demands a two-party system. If a considerable group of independents find that neither party represents their position, they should set to work with might and main to bring about a realignment of parties. In any event, there must be co-operation between people who believe in the same broad general principles, even though they disagree, perhaps violently, on minor matters. There is no other way by which representative government can be maintained with any degree of satisfaction to the people or with any guarantee of stability. Government is not representative of the public will when it becomes only an assemblage of local representatives each set on gathering spoils for his own district without regard to the general welfare.

In the government of an American state or local area, national party labels and allegiances generally confuse instead of clarify issues. The divisions of opinion that will naturally occur usually have little or no connection with national issues. Mayor La Guardia gave New York City a non-partisan administration and toward the close of his first term stated that the city would not go back to political administrations because they were too expensive. The issues between Mayor La Guardia and Tammany Hall were poles removed from the issues between Roosevelt and Landon. A division on national party lines would give the city government into the hands of the professional politicians who have for years milched the people. In the state of Nebraska, an attempt has been made to keep party politics out of the new unicameral legislature. The members are not elected under party labels. Whether or not the attempt will succeed remains to be seen.

We may conclude that if party divisions exist in state and local politics, they should not be very closely connected with national party divisions. However in actual practice it might

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be difficult to make the separation, because the foundation of national party strength is in the organization that extends from the national committee through state and county organizations down into the city precincts. If the local organization is not used in local politics, it will tend to grow weak and disintegrate. The only possible solution of the problem seems to lie in the intelligence of the electorate. The voters must learn to discriminate between national and local issues if they would give most effective expression to their will. "Straight ticket" voting under the old party labels will decline as the political intelligence of the voters increases. And yet the voter who would accomplish the most cannot afford to scratch promiscuously. He must consider issues as well as men, and he must vote for national officials who will work together for what he favors, and for state officials who will work together in the state.

Many students of government have long thought that a one-house legislature would be more effective in carrying out the popular will in American state government than the traditional bicameral body. Recently, the state of Nebraska decided to try out the idea. If the Nebraskans demonstrate that their new system is better than the old, other states will doubtless follow them. The arguments in favor of the unicameral legislature chiefly arise out of the fact that it simplifies procedure and concentrates responsibility. It is said that there can be no passing of the buck. No member can cover up his vote in any way, and the record of every member will be subjected to pitiless publicity. For this reason, the lobbyists of selfish interests will find it more difficult to control the legislature than in the old bicameral system with its shifting of responsibility from house to house and its secret conference committees on controversial matters.⁸ If these claims are realized, the unicameral legis-

⁸ George W. Norris, "The One-House Legislature," *National Municipal Review*, Vol. XXIV (1935), 87-89.

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lature will make a significant contribution toward government by public opinion.

The basis for representation has commonly been the territorial population unit. In the United States, we assume that all who have the privilege of voting should have equal weight; hence, we establish a territorial district and allow the people to elect one representative, and allow each voter to have one vote. On the continent of Europe, some countries have tried having larger districts with several representatives chosen by proportional representation, a system that is in a sense more democratic but is less practical because it tends to emphasize and perpetuate minority groupings. One of the most serious questions in connection with representative government is whether the system of representation based on territorial population units is adequate to meet the economic and social problems that confront the government in the modern period.

Something more than voting is necessary if the government is really to represent the public will. One of the important difficulties of the present system is that, as soon as the voters have voted, their existence as a group lapses until the next election. They do not remain in existence to direct a constant stream of collective counsel and criticism on their representatives. The electorate cannot give their officials full instructions at the time of election, and an intolerable situation would arise if they could, for a change in circumstances could easily render such instructions valueless or even harmful. Consequently, the representative either must become a pure representative acting on his own responsibility, in which case he is likely to be defeated at the next election, or he must measure public opinion in his district as best he can by unofficial methods, in which case the most vociferous and the most actively selfish interests will carry the greatest weight.

It is desirable that the needs and demands of legitimate in-

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terests be clearly developed and presented to the legislature. This has come to be done by pressure groups. Such groups have a great deal of influence on legislation, but they work by devious and unregulated methods. They fill a definite need in modern political organization, but they fill it in an irregular and not wholly satisfactory manner. Such organizations as the American Federation of Labor, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and numerous others, serve as important mediums through which individuals may establish and maintain contacts with the government and thus protect their interests. Government has become increasingly important in the life of individuals, whereas at the same time it has become increasingly more inaccessible and more difficult to influence. To a certain extent, the political party serves as a medium of contact between the individual and his government, but party platforms are vague and all-inclusive, and parties are not held closely responsible for their acts; thus, the individual has had to find other mediums through which to make his voice audible to the government. Pressure groups have been the result.

The problems of modern politics are becoming constantly more complex and vexatious. And as the United States becomes more industrialized, economic class consciousness is going to become greater, and class lines are going to be drawn with increasing sharpness in American politics. The national election of 1932 showed a drift toward class division at the polls. The election of 1936 saw a more definite alignment of certain economic classes against other economic classes. The attitude of organized labor is noticeably different from what it was in the pre-1929 period. The farmers are also more united and better organized for political action than they have ever been before. Class interests will become increasingly im-

portant factors as the representatives of the people work to give effect to the popular will.

We must have a government with power to act decisively and effectively in dealing with the complex problems of modern life. Industrial unrest and disagreement may grow to dangerous proportions if the government lacks the means to discover a definite public will or the power to translate it into effect. An article in the conservative *New York Times* of June 29, 1937, revealed the extent to which unrest might go in a time of stress, when, after telling of an epidemic of sit-down strikes and walkouts with accompanying tactics of the C.I.O. forces, it said that worried citizens of Michigan were afraid that revolution was at hand. Reaction against the C.I.O. had definitely set in.

Where it will end no man can say authoritatively. This writer has been told by sober, responsible men on both sides that it can end only in civil war unless the State and national administrations abandon their seeming partisanship for labor and the type of industrial unionism for which Mr. Lewis stands. . . .

In Michigan the struggle has ceased to be simply a battle between the unions and the industrialists who until Governor Frank Murphy's election as Governor in last Fall's New Deal avalanche, controlled politics as well as industry. It has become, instead, a struggle in which the middle class of retail merchants, white-collar workers, farmers and those workers who identify themselves with them, have lined up against the frankly proletarian worker who has cast his lot with the C.I.O.

Almost everywhere one goes . . . one runs across signs of incipient conflict. Baseball bats, shotguns and rifles have become almost standard equipment of restaurants, filling stations, stores and bars in many cities. In scores of cities and towns committees of vigilante leaders meet secretly once or twice a week in cellars and in homes with drawn shades to plan their strategy. Both sides have elaborate espionage systems and plotting and intrigue are everywhere.

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That such a condition of unrest and dissatisfaction with its dangerous possibilities of disaster to popular government should come to exist is evidence that something very serious is wrong with the political institutions of the country and should lead to a careful examination of the machinery of government with a view to its improvement to meet the needs of contemporary society. Class interests will have to be taken into consideration in our representative system, with all classes given a hearing. The political organization should be such that the various economic interests could be reconciled, or at least adjusted to one another, under government auspices and without violence. The time has passed when the settlement of industrial disputes can safely be left to trial by combat, in which victory goes to the strongest and the interest of the public is ignored while the belligerent parties wage war with each other.

Our present political system does not give equitable representation to class interests. Under it, the capitalist class tends to be over-represented, and it has been over-represented ever since the beginning of the government. The Constitution of the United States was drawn up by a convention of delegates most of whom were from the wealthy class and among whom there was not a single wage earner or frontiersman. The trend of American government since its foundation has been toward an increasingly popular control, but we have not yet reached a point approaching equality of class representation. Professor A. N. Holcombe has drawn up a chart showing the extent to which different economic classes were represented in the Seventy-Third Congress.⁹ His chart shows that the proletariat class constituted 51.7 per cent of the adult population of the United States at that time, whereas 1.3 per cent of the members of Congress were from that class. The capitalists consti-

⁹ A. N. Holcombe, *Government in a Planned Democracy*, 47. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

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tuted 1.6 per cent of the population and had 16.9 per cent of the members of Congress. The landlords, chiefly farmers, constituted 8 per cent of the population, but only 3.4 per cent of the congressmen came from this class. The intermediate class was greatly over-represented, with 10 per cent of the population and 69.3 per cent of the members of Congress. The congressmen in the intermediate class were chiefly lawyers, many of whom doubtless had business connections or investments that would have justified their inclusion as capitalists.

However, the predominance of the intermediate class is so great that it would control the government incontestably if the direct representation of social classes in Congress was a correct measure of their influence on government. Actually, the nature of our social organization is such that most of the channels that influence public opinion are under capitalist control. Newspapers and magazines, the radio, the schools, and various voluntary organizations that seek to cultivate and organize public opinion are largely controlled by the capitalist class. On the other hand, the laboring class has a tremendous potential power because of sheer numbers, and its influence has grown rapidly in recent years as labor unions became more powerful and took an increasingly active interest in politics. The increasing political power of labor has given rise to much apprehension among individuals in the classes that have hitherto controlled the government. One of the chief causes of the unrest and resentment that has threatened to lead to civil war in states such as Michigan is the prevailing attitude that has grown up under conditions as they existed in the past, and which assumes that the control of government by capitalistic interests is essential to peace and order and the general welfare.

As John Stuart Mill pointed out in his *Considerations on Representative Government*, we need not assume that when power resides in an exclusive class, that class will deliberately

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sacrifice other classes to themselves, but we must assume that, in the absence of its own representatives, the interests of a class are in danger of being overlooked. Even when the interests of such an excluded class are not overlooked but considered, the whole viewpoint of the people outside the class involved is very different from the outlook of individuals in the class. "It is an adherent condition of human affairs that no intention, however sincere, of protecting the interests of others can make it safe or salutary to tie up their own hands. Still more obviously true is it, that by their own hands only can any positive and durable improvement of their circumstances in life be worked out."

One proposed solution for the problem of class representation in modern government is the establishment of representation based on functional or economic groupings rather than on population territorial units. Italy and Russia have tried this plan. It realistically acknowledges that modern society is broken up into conflicting interests and bases the organization of government upon that fact. If such a system were established in a democracy, each class would supposedly be given its proper voice in the government. Pressure groups would be unnecessary, since the interests involved would have their representation directly inside the government and would therefore not find it necessary to try to make their voices heard from the outside. A further advantage would be in the greater accuracy with which representatives would be able to represent constituents. The group that elected the representative would be a permanent organization and would be able to keep in constant touch with him and to criticize and advise him. It would also be able to recall him whenever dissatisfied with his work.

On the other hand, there are certain disadvantages that adhere to functional representation. Americans will probably

think first of the fact that it is a radical change and perhaps assume that it is too radical to have any chance of adoption in the near future. However, this has little, if anything, to do with the merits of the proposition, and in view of the rapid changes that have taken place in political ideals and institutions since 1932, perhaps we should hesitate to assume that any change connected with the economic developments of modern times is too radical to be considered. Another point that is sometimes raised when functional representation is proposed is that it has been tried in modern times only by non-democratic countries. The assumption may be drawn that it is incompatible with popular government. This would seem to be an unwarranted assumption. And as a matter of fact, the legislatures of the modern democracies have evolved from a system of representation based roughly on economic groupings. The three estates in France, the English parliament with representation from lords spiritual and temporal and from the commons originally constituted a rough kind of functional representation.

The most serious objection to functional representation in the United States of our own time is that it would tend to emphasize and perpetuate classes rather than develop an appreciation of the general welfare and the importance of the whole nation. Our chief need in the present period of economic readjustment and its accompanying strain on political institutions is to develop loyalty to the whole group and tolerance for the interests of all. One of the requisites for such a development is the establishment of a government that will assure justice to all classes and in which all individuals will have confidence. We should try to reach this goal by a route that does not emphasize class differences any more than is absolutely necessary. And probably we should assume, as many political thinkers have asserted in the past, that the middle class should hold the bal-

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ance of power and its interests be considered of paramount importance if the political system is to be wholesome and stable.

In some instances in the United States, individual communities have made use of a modified form of functional representation for the control of certain phases of local government. An example is to be found in the organization provided in 1935 for the administration of the civil service system in Jefferson County, Alabama, in which Birmingham, a city of approximately 275,000 people, and smaller satellite urban areas are located. In order to establish a real merit system for the civil service of the county and city, controlling power was vested in a citizens supervisory commission composed of seventeen members, only one of which was a politically elected official. The members of the commission were: the probate judge of the county, the judge of the United States district court who resides in the county, the presidents of the Birmingham and Bessemer Chambers of Commerce, the president of the Birmingham Junior Chamber of Commerce, the presidents of two colleges located in the county, the president of the Birmingham Medical Association, the presidents of the Birmingham, Bessemer, and Tarrant City Trades Councils, a representative of the railway brotherhoods, the presidents of the Birmingham and Bessemer Parent-Teachers Associations, and the commanders of the Confederate Veterans, Spanish American War Veterans, and the American Legion. This citizens' commission appoints a personnel board, receives an annual report from it, and controls the budget of the personnel office. The personnel board of three members serves as a board of directors and appoints a personnel director who has active direction of administration. The system has been successful in establishing a real merit system in the county and city, and that fact has interesting implications for the student of representation.

Here is a community of approximately 400,000 people who,

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if they act through the regular processes of election, will elect a city and county government, which the "politicians" will control, and the "politicians" are generally thought of as men whose integrity is questionable and whose inefficiency as officials is unquestionable. At any rate, appointments to administrative positions will be made on the spoils basis. But split these same 400,000 people into business groups, labor unions, parent-teachers organizations, and similar groups and they will choose for their leaders men and women respected by the whole community whose interest in good government is unquestionable and who can be trusted to enforce a real merit system in city employment.

The explanation of the difference is not wholly clear, but certain factors may be noted. One important element in the situation is that organizations such as labor unions and professional associations seem closer home to the people than government. The people are interested in their activities and feel that they can have some influence in determining their policies, whereas government seems remote, and the individual citizen feels that his vote does not count for much. Then too, people in such smaller groups have more interests in common and tend to think alike on more matters than the electorate as a whole. This makes possible a definite channeling of opinion. They know what they want, and they have a more definite conception of the kind of leader who can give it to them. Another point that should be kept in mind is that the work done by the citizens' commission was in a very limited field of government. It was successful in the installation and maintenance of a merit system in the civil service. It might not be equally successful as an agency of general government.

Functional representation may not be desirable in legislative bodies, but certainly it is desirable that government be brought closer to the realities of life, to labor, to business, to education,

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and to the general welfare. Government should seem as close to the individual as his labor union or his professional association, or his church. His representatives should be chosen with equal regard for their ability and integrity. Further, there should be developed a greater sympathy between different social and economic groups. When men reason together, they generally come to satisfactory decisions and a mutual respect for one another. If they can agree on common objectives, they will find it easier to elect representatives who will give them the kind of government that they want.

There is much to be said in favor of keeping the work of making final decisions in the hands of legislatures whose members are elected from population territorial units by universal suffrage if the worst abuses of the system can be corrected. Such a legislature should have its responsibility clearly defined and should be held strictly accountable for its actions by the voters. The legislators should think and act in terms of the general welfare much more than they have in the past. The development of such an attitude will be furthered as the administrative branch of the government is removed from partisan politics and appointment to positions made a matter of merit instead of political pull. It will be furthered too by increasing the publicity that plays upon the legislators and the more careful definition of their responsibility. The Nebraska unicameral system is designed to accomplish such ends as these.

Probably the most important factor in the improvement of the representative system will be public opinion. As the people come to expect and demand higher standards of representation, as they are themselves brought to think increasingly in terms of the general welfare instead of in terms of particular selfish interests, their representatives will be forced to higher standards of action.

If we are to continue our system of population territorial rep-

resentation on the assumption that it provides for final decision by representatives chosen by a method most likely to insure consideration of the general welfare and the minimizing of class conflict, we must also greatly improve our facilities for consultation with the representatives of different economic interests. Under the present system, lobbyists may be consulted when legislation is drawn affecting their interests, but others affected are not likely to be consulted. In the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, steps have been taken to develop a more adequate system of consultation with the different group interests. This has been particularly true in the field of agriculture. Under the leadership of Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, the farmers of the nation have been organized into a great united force and machinery established for obtaining their opinions from the bottom to the top, and their opinions and advice are given great weight when administration policies in agriculture are being formulated. The heads of labor unions have also been consulted by the Roosevelt administration in regard to labor legislation, but the procedure has not been standardized. If the interests of all classes are to be given a hearing and an assurance of just treatment, the organs for the presentations of group opinions must be more adequately developed and the procedure of consultation must be regularized. The President and Congress should be able to obtain the opinions and the advice of authoritative representatives of capital, labor, agriculture, and other groups without depending upon the lobbyists of special interests to present only biased information on particular questions where their profits are involved.

Governments "are not made, but grow"; and if they are to prove satisfactory, they must grow to meet the needs of changing times in accordance with changing beliefs. A system of representation adequate for one age may fail to meet the needs

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of another age; or, if adequate, it may be allowed to develop abuses because of popular indifference. As we consider the problems that arise in connection with representation, we need to keep in mind the fundamental idea that the purpose of democratic representation is to provide a channel through which public opinion can be tangibly expressed and made effective.

XVII

POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

“**E**VERY government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree.” So wrote Thomas Jefferson in his *Notes on Virginia* in 1782. Particular instrumentalities and forms of democracy are bitterly criticized from time to time, and in the modern age of dictatorships, the whole principle of popular government seems to be endangered. Whether or not popular government will be successful in any country depends upon the masses of the people. They are the crux of the whole matter.

The leaders of American political life have widely disagreed since the beginning of the country's history as to the extent to which the participation of the masses of the people in government is desirable. The Jeffersonian school have held that the people will generally elect “the really good and wise” as their representatives, and make right decisions. They have held that the will of the majority should prevail. Their opponents have leaned toward the view of the distinguished Federalist who declared, “Your people is a great beast.” They have been concerned with the rights of propertied minorities. They have argued that the will of the people should be sifted through representatives not too closely controlled by mass public opinion, and that popular participation on too broad a scale is dangerous.

The question of popular participation in political affairs has

resolved itself largely into the matter of the use of the ballot. The public is not limited to voting as a means of influencing the government, but voting is a method of expressing public opinion in formal authoritative fashion. It is the basic means of popular participation. Accordingly, the question of who shall be allowed to vote becomes of fundamental importance. Of almost equal importance is the question of whom and what the voters shall be allowed to vote for; that is, the extent to which they shall be given direct control over their government. These questions have been warmly debated in different periods, as a general tendency toward increasing the machinery for popular control of government has manifested itself from time to time. In our own time we are concerned, of course, with the machinery of democratic government, but we are also particularly concerned with the possibilities of intelligent popular participation in government. It is important that the people have a ready means for controlling their government and that they be keenly alert to the importance of such control and that they have the facilities that will enable them to exercise their control wisely.

The makers of the American Constitution were very fearful of popular participation in political matters. They provided that of all the officers of the national government, only the members of the House of Representatives should be chosen directly by the voters, and in that case the person desiring to vote had to meet the suffrage qualifications established by his state. Many of the members of the convention were in favor of writing into the Constitution a provision making the ownership of land a requirement for voting. Gouverneur Morris argued for a constitutional property qualification on the ground that the "ignorant and the dependent" could not be any more safely trusted with the ballot than could children. "The time is not distant," he said, "when this Country will abound with

mechanics and manufacturers who will receive their bread from their employers. Will such men be the secure & faithful Guardians of liberty?" His answer was in the negative, and most of the members agreed with him. However, since the voting qualifications were not exactly the same in all states, and the feeling of states' rights was still strong, the convention was unable to agree on a national voting qualification, and the matter was left in the hands of the states.

Every one of the state constitutions of the time expressed the theory that the consent of the governed was the basis of all political authority, but all of them contained provisions limiting the right of voting and holding office to persons meeting either property or tax-paying qualifications. The ownership of real estate had been a common qualification before the Revolution, but there was a tendency in the period following the war to abandon property tests and substitute a tax-paying qualification. The Fathers gave official expression to the democratic ideal, but actually they set up an aristocracy. "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

In early colonial days, the colonist claimed a right to vote in the colony with very much the same attitude that the stockholder in a corporation claims a right to vote in corporation matters. The ownership of land was the qualification that entitled him to vote, just as the ownership of a block of stock entitles its holder to vote in a corporation.¹ This idea was brought over from England, and it continued to influence political thought long after the Revolution. As late as 1821, we find Chancellor Kent declaring in the New York Constitutional Convention, "Society is an association for the protection of property as well as of life, and the individual who contributes only one cent to the common stock, ought not to have

¹ See Kirk H. Porter, *A History of Suffrage in the United States*, 2, 3. University of Chicago Press.

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the same power and influence in directing the property concerns of the partnership, as he who contributes his thousands."

Although the stockholder idea long remained an influence on suffrage legislation, other theories began to make themselves felt even before the Revolution. In some colonies particularly, the theory that voting could be limited on other grounds for the good of the state came to be generally accepted. Religious orthodoxy, for instance, was made a qualification in some colonies. Later, as land ownership increasingly gave way as a test, other qualifications had to be added, such as residence requirements and the exclusion of criminals and feeble-minded persons. During the Jacksonian democratic revolution, when the movement for the extension of the suffrage gained momentum, the doctrine of the *right* to vote was emphasized again by many political leaders; but this time it was declared to be a right belonging to all adult males.

Thomas Jefferson had believed in a wide base for the suffrage, but it was the second democratic revolution, which reached its climax in the administration of President Jackson, that destroyed the aristocratic qualifications for voting and office-holding and brought about the general acceptance of manhood suffrage. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, one of the leading spokesmen of Jacksonian democracy, at one time expressed the conviction that class distinctions were incompatible with the dignity of citizenship.² This view was typical of the thought of the Jacksonians. Because of the phenomenal growth of the country's population and the expansion of its territory in this period, it was impossible for the privileged classes to resist the practical application of such ideas or maintain their proprietary hold on the government.

The constitutions of most of the new states admitted to the Union contained no property qualification for voting and office-

² *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 19 Howard, 416.

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holding, and after 1817, no state came in with either a property or a tax-paying qualification. The small farmers and laborers of the original thirteen states gradually secured the abolition of such qualifications in their states. The democratic movement of the time was reflected as well in the increasing tendency of new constitutions to provide for the popular election of the governor, judges, and other state officers, and for the ratification of constitutions by popular referendum.

Conservatives viewed these innovations with alarm, and they did not give way without bitterly opposing them. Chancellor Kent spoke for this school of thought when, in discussing the question of suffrage in the New York Constitutional Convention of 1821, he called it an "extreme democratic principle" that had "terminated disastrously, and been productive of corruption, injustice, violence, and tyranny" wherever it had been tried. He feared that universal suffrage would endanger property rights, and added, "The danger which we have hereafter to apprehend, is not the want, but the abuse of liberty. We have to apprehend the oppression of minorities, and a disposition to encroach on private right—to disturb chartered privileges—and to weaken, degrade, and overawe the administration of justice. . . ."³

In spite of their forebodings and their strenuous opposition, the conservatives were unable to stem the tide. By 1850, property qualifications had been done away with in all but one state. Tax-paying qualifications remained in seven states, but they were so low in those states that they had come to be looked upon merely as registration fees.

At the close of the Civil War, the suffrage was broadened by the adoption of the fifteenth amendment to the federal Constitution, which prohibited the denial of voting rights on account of race or color. However, as soon as the southern states re-

³ *Reports of the Proceedings and Debates of the Convention of 1821.*

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gained control of their own governments after the Reconstruction period, they began passing laws designed to prevent Negroes from voting and in effect nullify the constitutional amendment. The laws now used for that purpose generally provide for a literacy test or a tax requirement.

In recent times, the tendency is away from unrestricted manhood suffrage. The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the privilege of voting, but with that exception, modern legislation has been restrictive rather than expansive. As late as 1914, nine states allowed aliens who had taken out their "first papers" to vote. Since the World War, all states have made citizenship a requirement for voting. Registration requirements have been made stricter in a number of states. The literacy test has also been adopted by a number of states outside the South.

Literacy tests are commonly given by local election or registration officials. When administered in this way, the test is of doubtful value if the purpose is really to test literacy, for the election officials are politicians and likely to be influenced by other than educational factors. The State of New York in 1923 enacted a law designed to make the test non-political. It required that every new applicant for registration must either present a certificate of graduation from the eighth grade or pass a reading and writing test administered by the school authorities. The test is uniform throughout the state and consists of reading in English a simple paragraph about a hundred words in length and writing answers to eight or ten questions based on the reading matter. Where the end desired is restriction of the electorate to the literate rather than a camouflaged exclusion of a particular race or racial elements, the New York law may well serve as a model for future legislation.

The prevalent theory of suffrage in the modern period is that voting is not a right. Some political thinkers regard it as a privilege, others hold that it is a public office or function. In

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either case, the vote is to be granted to persons most capable of exercising it for the promotion of the welfare of the community. This doctrine, of course, cannot be construed too strictly if we are to retain democratic government. The attempt is made in a literacy requirement, such as that of New York, only to bar those most obviously unfit. Although suffrage legislation is now generally passed on the assumption that voting is to be regulated for the general welfare as the state sees fit, the doctrine that voting is a natural right is not wholly dead. The natural rights argument is likely to be used by excluded classes who desire suffrage, as it was used in the campaign for woman suffrage. However, the present tendency is toward legislation placing increased emphasis on the elementary qualifications that enable the citizen to form fairly reasonable opinions and express them at the polls.

Of similar importance to the question of who shall vote is the question of the nature and extent of the power to be given to the voters. The second democratic revolution brought about a wide extension of the suffrage and the popular election of an increased number of officials. The third democratic revolution, starting at the close of the nineteenth century, brought about the adoption in many states of the initiative, referendum, and recall—devices intended to place in the hands of the voters effective machinery for the direct control of their government.

The movement for the adoption of the initiative and referendum was a result of popular mistrust of legislatures, a mistrust that was well founded. Railroads and other large corporations openly sought to control legislation and prevent the passage of laws antagonistic to their interests. Investigations not infrequently revealed that legislators had sold franchises to corporations or blackmailed corporations by threatening to pass regulatory legislation. Legislative conduct was so corrupt, we are told, that it shocked even the far from delicate feelings of

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P. T. Barnum, a showman long accustomed to making money by means often involving deceit of the public.⁴ The more progressive advocates of reform proposed to place the power to make laws, or to repeal those passed by venal legislators, in the hands of the people themselves.

The people had long been familiar with the referendum as it was used to approve state constitutions or constitutional amendments, but the initiative and referendum as agencies for the passage or repeal of statutes represented a step forward that met with approval only in progressive circles. However, beginning with the adoption by South Dakota in 1898 of a constitutional amendment providing for state-wide use of the initiative and referendum, the movement spread rapidly for a decade or so. By 1912, sixteen states, most of them in the West, had provided for some form of direct legislation. Since that time, only three states have adopted it.

The initiative and referendum were advocated by progressives of all parties. The Populists were the first to take up the cause. With an eye on corrupt representative bodies, they favored giving the people themselves power to legislate on the theory that "A majority of the people can never be corruptly influenced." William Jennings Bryan advocated the initiative and referendum as early as 1896. In 1911, the National Progressive Republican League favored these reforms at the same time that they advocated popular election of United States Senators and the direct primary. Woodrow Wilson, who as a political theorist had opposed the initiative and referendum and the recall, after his experience as a practicing politician, declared himself in favor of them. He was converted, he said, because he had found that these measures were not designed to destroy representative government, as the critics asserted, but to

⁴ Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*, Vol. II, 557. The Macmillan Co.

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restore it to its original purpose and place the people in control of their own affairs. Representative government in theory was very different from the government that actually existed and responded "to the impulse of subsidized machines," with its important processes carried on in secret. He asserted that the initiative and referendum were being proposed "as a means of bringing our representatives back to the consciousness that what they are bound in duty and in mere policy to do is to represent the sovereign people whom they profess to serve and not the private interests which creep into their counsels by way of machine orders and committee conferences."⁵

The conservative opponents of these new instrumentalities of democracy saw in them threats to the principles of representative government and looked on them with something of the same fear that had been felt by their ancestors who had opposed manhood suffrage. Various objections were raised and vigorously presented to the people. Of the referendum it was said that the people were allowed to express only a "yes" or "no" opinion on the particular question submitted to them. Further, if the people are incapable of selecting honest and intelligent legislators, they will be incapable of voting wisely on measures presented to them at the polls. The facts necessary for the formation of an intelligent public opinion on such measures are not likely to be available to most people. The people may be able to decide wisely on the general direction in which they want to go without being equipped to weigh the merits of a particular measure. Then too, the conservatives declared, the quality of legislators would be impaired because their sense of responsibility will be reduced. Of the initiative, it was said, no chance was offered for the improvement of proposed bills by

⁵ Address at Kansas City, May 5, 1911. *College and State*, Vol. II, 288. See also his letter to Professor R. H. Dabney, December 26, 1911. *College and State*, Vol. II, 323, 324. Harper & Brothers.

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discussion and compromise. President Taft, one of the ablest opponents of the initiative, referendum, and recall, declared that a socialistic motive was back of the movement. He feared that the majority wanted to get control of the government in order to make the rich poorer and the poor richer.⁶

Provision for the recall of elected officials was part of the movement to restore government to the people, which included the initiative and referendum. It was first adopted by Oregon in 1908. Since that time, ten other states have provided for it. The recall was advocated as a means of restoring to the representatives a sense of direct responsibility to the people whose servants they were supposed to be. Opponents of the reform asserted that it would be used to drive out of office useful public officials when they became momentarily unpopular, and that it would destroy the probability of independent and courageous action on the part of public officials.

The recall of judges met particularly strenuous objections. President Taft expressed the attitude of the conservatives in 1911, when he vetoed a resolution admitting Arizona to statehood with a constitution containing a provision for recall. In the course of the veto message, he declared that the application of the recall to judges seemed to him "so pernicious in its effect, so destructive of independence in the judiciary, so likely to subject the rights of the individual to the possible tyranny of a popular majority," and in general so injurious to the cause of free government that he must disapprove a constitution containing such a provision. He painted a dark picture of the possibilities inherent in judicial recall.

By the recall in the Arizona constitution, it is proposed to give to the majority power to remove arbitrarily, and without delay, any judge who may have the courage to render an unpopular decision.

⁶ See William Howard Taft, *Popular Government*, Chapters 3, 4, Yale University Press; and A. Lawrence Lowell, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*, Chapters 11-15, Longmans, Green & Company.

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. . . No period of delay is interposed for the abatement of popular feeling. . . . The judge is treated as the instrument and servant of a majority of the people and subject to their momentary will, not after a long term in which his qualities as a judge and his character as a man have been subjected to a test of all the varieties of judicial work and duty so as to furnish a proper means of measuring his fitness for continuance in another term. On the instant of an unpopular ruling . . . he is to be haled before the electorate as a tribunal, with no judicial hearing, evidence, or defense, and thrown out of office, and disgraced for life because he has failed, in a single decision, it may be, to satisfy the popular demand. . . . Those would profit by the recall who have the best opportunity of rousing the majority of the people to action on a sudden impulse. . . . What kind of judgments might those on the unpopular side expect from courts whose judges must make their decisions under such legalized terrorism? The character of the judges would deteriorate to that of trimmers and time-servers, and independent judicial action would be a thing of the past.⁷

After years of experience with the recall and initiative and referendum, it is now difficult for us to understand the violence of the opposition that the proposal of these measures originally aroused. In practice, they have not resulted in the abuses that their opponents so apprehensively predicted. The recall has not created any unwholesome timidity in the representatives of the people. It has not made "trimmers and time-servers" of judges or destroyed the independence of the courts. Very few of the principal officers of states have ever been recalled, and in almost every case where any official of any kind has been recalled, good reasons have existed for the action. The initiative and referendum have likewise been used conservatively. The people tend to be even more conservative than their representatives. However, on occasion, these devices have enabled the people to block a law that they disliked, or to enact one that they wanted but were unable to get through the legislature. Laws adopted in this manner have not been more carelessly

⁷ House Document No. 106, 62d Congress, First Session.

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drawn than those passed by legislatures. Representative government has not been destroyed or even weakened. The function of the initiative, referendum, and recall has turned out to be similar to that of a gun behind the door. It is not used often or regularly, but the knowledge that it is there when needed sometimes prevents abuse that would make its use necessary.

The use of the referendum and the publicity technique that it may call forth were illustrated in California in 1936 in a referendum on a bill passed by the legislature, levying a heavy punitive tax on chain stores. Between 1931 and 1936, some twenty state legislatures had passed similar legislation, and nowhere had the people had a chance to vote on it themselves. When the California tax was scheduled to come before the voters, the chain stores decided to put on a great publicity campaign. One of the leading publicity experts in the state was placed in charge. His first step was to find out what the people were thinking and why they mistrusted chain stores. Then he set to work to overcome the unfriendliness that was discovered. Employee discontent was alleviated by a suggestion that wages were to be raised and hours shortened. Newspaper objections were discovered and answered. The chains co-operated with the farmers' co-operatives by helping them market their fruit at a critical time. Before the campaign was over, most of the newspapers were supporting the chain stores and numerous business, labor, and consumer organizations had gone on record as opposing the tax. All this in spite of the fact that the independent stores were carrying on a strenuous campaign favoring the tax. When the people voted, they defeated the tax law by a landslide. Every county except one voted against it.⁸

The New York Times saw in the results an indication that

⁸ S. H. Walker and Paul Sklar, "Business Finds Its Voice," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 438-40.

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the majority of the voters were "aware of their gains as consumers through the economies that the chains have made possible," and suggested that legislators in states having special taxes on chain stores had been deceived into misinterpreting public opinion because of the agitation of small storekeepers.⁹ Whether this interpretation was correct, or the results primarily a victory for good publicity technique, may be a matter of dispute. At any rate, the principle that the people were sovereign where the instruments of direct legislation were at hand and that they, rather than their representatives, must be courted and won was amply demonstrated.

In addition to provision for the initiative and referendum for the passage of statutes, a number of states have made possible the proposal of constitutional amendments by popular initiative. Governmental authorities in the states that have used the constitutional initiative generally agree that the draftsmanship of amendments adopted by this method is not inferior to that of amendments proposed by the legislature. Proposals for the special benefit of particular interests, although sometimes advanced, are seldom adopted. The petition method has not been used extensively, but it has made it possible to bring before the people proposals for which there was a strong demand but which the legislature refused to support. And the percentage of amendments adopted after submission by petition does not differ greatly from the percentage of legislature-proposed amendments which are adopted.¹⁰

American experience with the devices of direct legislation has thus far been confined wholly to state and local governments, but there has recently been a widespread demand for the adoption of an amendment to the federal Constitution that

⁹ *New York Times*, November 6, 1936.

¹⁰ George H. Hallett, Jr., "The Constitutional Initiative Starts a New Advance," *National Municipal Review*, Vol. XXIV (1935), 255, 256.

would take away the power of Congress to declare war and place it in the hands of the people. This proposal has grown out of the popular opposition to war and the feeling that the President and Congress may lead the country into war for reasons that would not seem sufficient to the masses of the people. Since the World War, revelations of the influence of financial interests and the sinister activities of the munitions makers have combined with the power politics abroad to make the people fear that their representatives may be led to make a mistake in the fateful matter of leading the country into war.

The idea of a referendum on war, although more popular in recent years than ever before, is not an invention of this period. On the eve of American entrance into the World War, William Jennings Bryan said, "If we could get the votes of the American people, nine-tenths of them would say that we should defend ourselves, but that not a boy should be sent to Europe to fight under the banner of a European monarch or die under a European banner."¹¹ And in 1921, he outlined a proposed legislative program for the Democratic party, including the plank, "We favor a national referendum on war before a declaration of war can be made by Congress unless the country is invaded by a foreign foe."¹² The disillusionment of the post-war period and the seeming disintegration of the world's machinery for the maintenance of peace have combined to win many converts to this position.

In February, 1937, Congressman Louis Ludlow introduced into the House of Representatives a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution that would provide that except in case of the invasion of the United States or its pos-

¹¹ At a meeting in the District of Columbia, February 4, 1917, *New York Times*, February 5, 1917.

¹² *New York Times*, February 17, 1921.

sessions, "the authority of Congress to declare war shall not become effective until confirmed by a majority of all votes cast thereon in a nation-wide referendum." When, late in 1937, this resolution was ordered out of committee by a petition signed by 218 members of the House, there was a flurry of excitement among advocates and opponents of the proposal because of the possibility that it would pass the House. Although the House finally rejected the resolution, the question involved was warmly discussed before it was disposed of.

The arguments against the proposal were based mainly on the contentions that it would weaken the diplomatic position of the United States and that the people were incapable of exercising the power wisely. Opponents asserted that the power and prestige of the President in diplomatic negotiations would be so weakened that he would be unable to prevent or adequately deal with the kind of outrages that lead to war. Former Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson argued further that the war power could be more wisely handled by the representatives of the people than by the people themselves. He viewed the proposed transfer of the war-making power from the popular representatives, who from their duties are supposed to have acquired familiarity with the country's international relations, to 130,000,000 people to be exercised through a national referendum as "a brand new experiment in the most vital and delicate function that a government can be called upon to perform." The general public, he held, is necessarily unacquainted with the decisions and events in the long-drawn-out national policy that leads a nation into war. The President, the Secretary of State, and the members of congressional committees are the people who are required by the American Constitution to keep themselves familiar with these matters. "They are our chosen experts and representatives to whom we have

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long since entrusted the determining factors of our fate. In making their ultimate decision, we cannot overrule them without the gravest risk."¹³

Advocates of the resolution, on the other hand, argued that the war-making power was of such fundamental importance that the mass of the people who have to bear the burdens of war should be allowed to make their own decision on the matter. They are already allowed to elect officials and decide minor questions, it was said, and with much more reason they should be allowed to decide this supremely important question. Congressmen asserted that the President had the power to bring about a situation that would force Congress to declare war, and that, therefore, the real war power rested with the President. To the defenders of the principle of representative government, one representative said, "Yet unlimited power to the President in creating a war situation results in an actual cancellation of representative government once war is declared. During war the course of Congress is predetermined by the fact that the President created a war situation. . . . Allowing the President freedom to bring on a war without a mandate from the people is a direct menace to representative government, and actually, when war is declared, sets up a Fascist type of government."¹⁴

The demand for the transfer of the war-making power to the people, like the earlier movement for the initiative, referendum, and recall, in state and local government grows out of a popular conviction that elected representatives cannot always be trusted to carry out the will of the people in important matters. The advocates of such measures come largely from the ranks of those who believe with Jefferson and Bryan and others of their school of thought that the will of the majority should always prevail.

¹³ Letter to *The New York Times*, Reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, January 4, 1938.

¹⁴ Hamilton Fish, *Congressional Record*, January 4, 1938.

The opponents come from the ranks of those who are anxious to protect minority rights and who believe that the representatives of the people are likely to make fewer mistakes than the people themselves on all except general questions of policy.

The same dissatisfaction with the abuses of representative government that produced the movement for the initiative, referendum, and recall in the third democratic revolution also led to a demand that the convention system of making nominations be replaced by the more democratic direct primary. The convention system had originated as a Jacksonian device designed to replace the undemocratic caucus system that had preceded it. In the years that followed, the nominating convention had developed essentially the same objectionable features that had characterized the caucus. Only a small percentage of party voters participated in the selection of delegates to conventions. As a result, conventions were made up of officeholders and office-seekers chosen by professional politicians. Important decisions were made in smoke-filled hotel rooms where a few old and experienced political manipulators gathered and made trades and deals with one another until they arrived at conclusions to be transmitted to the convention delegates for ratification.

When the convention system was assailed by the progressives, the politicians rushed to its defense, but it was also defended by many of the same thoughtful conservatives who opposed the initiative, referendum, and recall. The direct primary would eliminate the conference and discussion and deliberation that had been a part of the convention system, they said. It would destroy party responsibility. It was an attack on the great principle of representation.

Robert M. La Follette was among the first and most forceful of the advocates of the direct primary. He asserted that the nomination of candidates for office was the foundation of the

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whole representative system of government. When bad men controlled the nominations, good government was impossible. And he said further:

The life principle of representative government is that those chosen to govern shall faithfully represent the governed. To insure this the representative must be chosen by those whom he is to represent. . . . The moment that any power or authority over the representative comes between him and those who have selected him to be their representative that moment he ceases to be their representative. . . . It is vital then in representative government that no power or authority shall be permitted to come between the representative and those whom he is to represent. To secure this every complication of detail and method, in any system behind which such intruding power or authority might be concealed must be torn down and cast aside. The voter, and the candidate for nomination who desires to represent the voter, must be brought within reaching distance of each other, must stand face to face.¹⁵

The direct primary soon won general acceptance after La Follette's state, Wisconsin, led the way with its adoption in 1903. By 1913, a large majority of the states had adopted the direct primary for the nomination of part or all of their officials. In practice, it has not resulted in the thorough reform which its advocates hoped for. The professional politicians and bosses often control the primary, but the people prefer such a system to the convention, which the professional politicians and bosses always controlled. The direct primary does not guarantee that the bosses will be ousted by an untrammelled expression of public opinion, but it does provide the machinery through which the people can assert themselves when they become aroused enough to demand the selection of representatives who will owe first allegiance to them rather than to special interests.

Even more important than democratic machinery in a country where popular government prevails is the quality of the electorate. How well the people will exercise their power de-

¹⁵ *The Political Philosophy of Robert M. La Follette*, compiled by Ellen Lorelle, 29, 30. The Robert M. La Follette Co.

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pend upon their character, intelligence, and alertness, and the facilities that they have for getting the information necessary for the formation of reasonable opinions. In this connection, such things as popular interest in public affairs, the educational background of the people, and the content of what the masses of the people read and hear become extremely important.

The apathy of American voters has long been a subject of discussion among those interested in politics. Sometimes strenuous campaigns have been waged to "get out the vote." Although the quality of the votes cast is probably more important than the quantity, we may agree with Jefferson that the government is strongest "of which every man feels himself a part." The conclusion must be that the soundest government is one in which a large proportion of the citizens vote, and vote with some knowledge of what they are doing.

The reasons why people do not vote are significant in this connection. A careful study in a typical middle western city of about 50,000 people revealed that a great many of its citizens viewed politics with indifference or repugnance because in their minds politics was identified with fraud. Candidates for office did not come from among the ranks of the ablest and most highly respected citizens of the community. The real leaders were more interested in business than in politics. In spite of this condition, there was a general feeling among the people that no other country is better governed than the United States and that faults that existed were the result of the weakness of human nature.¹⁶ In Chicago, the most common causes of non-voting were found to be, "general indifference, illness, absence, neglect, disbelief in woman's voting, and ignorance or timidity regarding elections."¹⁷

¹⁶ Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown*, 421; *Middletown in Transition*, 321. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

¹⁷ Charles Edward Merriam and Harold Foote Gosnell, *Non-Voting*, 36. University of Chicago Press.

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Women show less interest than men in elections. In many cases, married women are persuaded to vote by their husbands, and they vote as their husbands do.¹⁸ However, the failure of women to vote in greater numbers has been due, partially at least, to the fact that the privilege of voting was new and strange. The percentage of women who vote in Presidential elections showed a considerable increase as the years passed, after the adoption of the nineteenth amendment. It is estimated that they cast about 25 per cent of the total vote for President in 1920 (they received the franchise too late to register in some states); 35 per cent in 1924; more than 43 per cent in 1928; and approximately 42½ per cent in 1932.¹⁹

The solution for the problem of indifference and kindred causes of non-voting lies not in getting people to vote in spite of their indifference, but in creating conditions that will lead them to take an interest in governmental affairs and inform themselves on the issues involved. Increased education will perhaps do as much as anything to bring this about. It has been demonstrated that the more schooling an individual has, the more likely he is to register and vote, at least in Presidential elections.²⁰ The simplification of issues and election procedure will also have beneficial results, in that it will tend to do away with the feeling of helplessness that keeps a considerable number of citizens from voting. Similarly, the long ballot, which sometimes makes it necessary for the citizen to vote on five or six feet of names, most of which he cannot possibly know anything about, should give way to a short ballot, which will make possible a real expression of opinion.

Lack of schooling is not only a cause of non-voting, but we

¹⁸ Roscoe C. Martin, "The Municipal Electorate: A Case Study," *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. XIV (1933), 202-5.

¹⁹ Frederic A. Ogg and P. Orman Ray, *Introduction to American Government*, fifth edition, 161, fn. D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc.

²⁰ Harold F. Gosnell, *Getting Out the Vote*, 98. University of Chicago Press.

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may also assume that a certain amount of education is absolutely necessary for intelligent voting. The percentage of illiterates in some localities is large enough to constitute a considerable element of the population. In the states, where illiteracy is greatest, literacy tests bar these people from voting. However there are many adults who are not classified as illiterates who do not have enough education to enable them to form intelligent opinions in politics. Many of these people will not make any effort to vote, because they are not interested. If they do not vote, they leave the power of decision in the hands of those who do vote—in some cases, a relatively small proportion of the population. If educationally unqualified citizens vote, they must either vote more or less blindly or follow the recommendations of individuals whose judgment they trust or whose money or patronage has purchased their votes. In any case, the presence of a large percentage of illiterates or of relatively uneducated literates is a threat both to democracy and to good government.

The percentage of illiteracy varies widely in the different states. The expenditure for education also varies widely. The states with the highest percentage of illiterates should be spending the most money on education if they are to offer their citizens the opportunity for intelligent participation in public affairs that is to be found in the states where less illiteracy is to be found. However, in many cases, for financial or other reasons, this is not being done. The table²¹ shows the percentage

²¹ STATE	PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERACY 1930	AMOUNT SPENT ON SCHOOLS PER CHILD OF SCHOOL AGE 1935-6
Iowa.....	0.8	\$54.25
Oregon.....	1.0	59.40
Washington.....	1.0	65.48
Idaho.....	1.1	55.18
Nebraska.....	1.2	48.15
Utah.....	1.2	52.94
Kansas.....	1.2	50.39

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of illiteracy and the expenditure on education per child of school age in the different states.

STATE	PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERACY 1930	AMOUNT SPENT ON SCHOOLS PER CHILD OF SCHOOL AGE 1935-6
South Dakota.....	1.2	\$55.90
Minnesota.....	1.3	60.74
North Dakota.....	1.5	46.69
Wyoming.....	1.6	78.71
Indiana.....	1.7	53.65
Montana.....	1.7	69.28
Wisconsin.....	1.9	55.18
Michigan.....	2.0	56.10
Vermont.....	2.2	44.32
Missouri.....	2.3	41.52
Ohio.....	2.3	58.86
Illinois.....	2.4	55.70
California.....	2.6	97.07
Maine.....	2.7	41.13
New Hampshire.....	2.7	52.45
Colorado.....	2.8	61.38
Oklahoma.....	2.8	30.39
Pennsylvania.....	3.1	54.53
Massachusetts.....	3.5	74.53
New York.....	3.7	95.08
New Jersey.....	3.8	74.18
Maryland.....	3.8	46.18
Delaware.....	4.0	68.60
Nevada.....	4.4	109.87
Connecticut.....	4.5	62.12
West Virginia.....	4.8	42.11
Rhode Island.....	4.9	58.20
Kentucky.....	6.6	25.36
Arkansas.....	6.8	15.81
Texas.....	6.8	35.57
Florida.....	7.1	41.58
Tennessee.....	7.2	24.15
Virginia.....	8.7	26.29
Georgia.....	9.4	20.41
North Carolina.....	10.0	22.09
Arizona.....	10.1	53.41
Alabama.....	12.6	18.61
Mississippi.....	13.1	20.13
New Mexico.....	13.3	44.99
Louisiana.....	13.5	26.34
South Carolina.....	14.9	19.80

Illiteracy rates are from *The World Almanac* for 1938, 379. Statistics on amount spent on schools are from *The Advisory Committee on Education Report of the Committee*, February, 1938, 225.

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Next in importance to the development of an electorate with minds trained for the formation of reasonable opinions on public questions are adequate facilities for the acquisition of information. First-hand information, commonly available to voters in the simple days of town-meeting politics, is no longer a possibility. Facts must be acquired second hand. They must be relayed through various channels, of which the newspaper and the radio are among the most important.

Many people who read newspapers emerge politically ignorant, but people who do not read newspapers are practically certain to be politically ignorant. When the individual reads a newspaper, the kind of newspaper is important, and also the part of the paper that is read. The person who specializes in comics, sports, or advertisements might as well not read any newspaper so far as his political enlightenment is concerned.

A study of home reading in New York City in 1934 revealed the newspapers most popular among the reading public and the reasons for their popularity.²² More than twenty-two thousand homes were reported on, and an attempt was made to route the interviewers so that reports in the different economic levels would give a fair cross-section of the people. The papers read in the most homes were as follows:

<i>In the mornings</i>		<i>In the evenings</i>	
<i>News</i>	7,426	<i>Journal</i>	5,278
<i>American</i>	3,478	<i>World-Telegram</i>	5,276
<i>Times</i>	3,311	<i>Sun</i>	2,541
<i>Mirror</i>	2,521	<i>News</i>	1,766
<i>Herald-Tribune</i>	2,052	<i>Brooklyn Eagle</i>	996

Among the reasons most commonly given for the choice of the particular newspaper read in the home were the following: general news, sports, advertisements, comics, pictures, editorial, features, politics. The most common reason given for the

²² Hugh E. Agnew, Department of Marketing, New York University, *Survey of Home Reading of New York City Newspapers* (mimeographed).

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choice of the *American*, *Herald Tribune*, *Times*, *Journal*, *Sun*, and *World-Telegram* was general news. More people who read the *News* chose it for pictures than for anything else, whereas the *Mirror* was most popular for comics, with pictures a close second. Editorials was the second most frequent of the reasons mentioned above that was given for choice of the *Times*, *Herald Tribune*, and *Sun*, and the most common reason given by the readers of the *Post*. Sports, advertisements, comics, features, and editorials were all more commonly given as reasons for choice than politics. In the case of the *Times*, politics was the fourth cause for popularity; with the *Herald Tribune* it was sixth. With the *News*, *Mirror*, and *Journal*, it was last among those listed. General news, editorials, politics, and possibly features, would all tend to contribute to the political education of readers. The evidence indicates that the number of people who choose their paper for one or more of these reasons, particularly in the case of the better newspapers, is not discouragingly small.

The authors of *Middletown* found when they investigated the typical middle western city of Muncie, Indiana, in the prosperous days of 1929, that practically every family in town received one or both of the city's daily newspapers, and out-of-town papers had a circulation of from 1,200 to 1,500 a day. When they returned in the post-depression year, 1933, they discovered that the city circulation of the morning paper had fallen off by 22 per cent and the circulation of the afternoon paper had dropped 16 per cent, in spite of the fact that the city's population had increased by about one thousand. The reading of out-of-town papers had fallen off even more sharply in this period.²⁸ In sections of the country where income was lower or the extremes of wealth and poverty were greater than

²⁸ Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown*, 471, 472; *Middletown in Transition*, 385. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

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in such a middle western city, and among the rural population in many places, the percentage of people having access to newspapers would be considerably smaller than in "Middletown."

Citizens who are going to vote intelligently may be expected to read the newspapers, but they should read more than the newspapers. There are a number of good magazines that discuss public questions in thought-provoking style and add much to the information that may be gained from newspapers. Newspapers are the ABC's of political reading, but we cannot stop with the ABC's if we expect democratic government to be most successful. The circulation statistics of the leading intellectual magazines in the United States that discuss public questions reveal that only a very small percentage of the population read them. It should be remembered, however, that the people who do read such magazines are, as a class, intellectual leaders whose influence on community life is out of proportion to their numbers. The table²⁴ indicates the circulation of four of the

²⁴ MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS PER 10,000 POPULATION, BY STATES

STATE	HARPERS	FORUM	NATION	NEW REPUBLIC
Alabama.....	3.25	1.48	.48	.43
Arizona.....	10.00	4.61	2.33	2.11
Arkansas.....	2.25	2.00	.29	.23
California.....	15.66	5.36	6.01	4.13
Colorado.....	9.94	4.30	2.61	2.22
Connecticut.....	13.80	3.04	4.27	3.85
Delaware.....	8.12	2.22	2.64	4.14
Florida.....	6.16	3.01	1.25	1.10
Georgia.....	3.71	1.71	.53	.47
Idaho.....	5.90	6.47	2.15	1.05
Illinois.....	8.38	3.34	3.85	3.19
Indiana.....	5.38	2.46	1.28	1.14
Iowa.....	5.67	2.42	1.22	1.00
Kansas.....	6.08	3.76	1.51	1.22
Kentucky.....	3.81	1.73	.64	.40
Louisiana.....	3.22	3.20	.82	.63
Maine.....	10.57	2.36	1.82	1.12
Maryland.....	8.95	1.77	2.76	1.77
Massachusetts.....	14.42	3.12	4.05	3.13
Michigan.....	7.98	3.58	2.80	2.04
Minnesota.....	9.50	4.81	3.51	2.38

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leading magazines. The number of readers is, of course, not measured in a complete way by circulation figures, for many copies are sent to libraries and there widely read by people of all classes. However, it is also true that many readers are interested in literary or other features of these magazines and may get little of political value from their reading.

In recent years, the radio has become one of the most important channels of communication and an agency of primary importance in the formation of opinions. Presidential messages, campaign speeches, various discussions on public affairs, and news summaries and comments are all broadcast in quantity enough to constitute one of the most important sources of infor-

STATE	HARPERS	FORUM	NATION	NEW REPUBLIC
Mississippi.....	2.75	1.56	.34	.28
Missouri.....	4.63	2.49	1.45	1.32
Montana.....	9.54	5.21	4.21	2.36
Nebraska.....	6.02	4.08	1.17	1.01
Nevada.....	12.28	6.14	4.55	2.18
New Hampshire.....	13.94	3.22	2.82	1.75
New Jersey.....	8.79	2.70	3.33	1.84
New Mexico.....	9.76	3.86	2.54	2.23
New York.....	12.41	3.81	7.95	4.59
North Carolina.....	4.44	3.82	.80	.48
North Dakota.....	3.56	1.30	1.27	.74
Ohio.....	7.78	2.71	2.62	1.75
Oklahoma.....	3.86	3.32	.80	.86
Oregon.....	8.48	4.89	3.54	2.61
Pennsylvania.....	6.45	2.38	2.61	1.57
Rhode Island.....	9.63	3.00	2.07	1.60
South Carolina.....	2.51	2.11	.47	.33
South Dakota.....	3.55	3.61	1.26	.97
Tennessee.....	3.41	1.69	.57	.56
Texas.....	4.03	2.84	.75	.61
Utah.....	9.36	12.77	1.12	1.52
Vermont.....	13.84	2.72	2.43	2.17
Virginia.....	6.07	2.83	1.37	.92
Washington.....	11.27	4.08	4.68	3.49
West Virginia.....	4.28	2.17	1.01	.43
Wisconsin.....	7.74	3.75	2.48	1.97
Wyoming.....	7.91	4.00	2.09	1.45

Based on circulation figures for 1937 furnished by the magazines, and United States Bureau of Census estimates of population for July 1, 1937.

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mation for the average citizen. There are more than 30,000,000 radio sets in the United States, a higher per-capita number than in any other country in the world, and the potential radio audience in the United States is estimated at 80,000,000 people.²⁵

The time is approaching when almost every person in the United States will have access to a radio. However, certain sections of the country are much ahead of others in the number of persons having radios, as the table²⁶ shows.

As the number of radios increases, the importance of the radio as an instrumentality for public enlightenment will increase. As long as it acts as a non-partisan agency concerned with getting all important facts to the listeners, it will come nearer to

²⁵ Franklin Dunham, "Democracy and the Radio," *Public Opinion in a Democracy*, supplement to *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, January, 1938, 77.

26 STATE	PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES HAVING RADIO SETS 1934	STATE	PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES HAVING RADIO SETS 1934
New Jersey.....	87	Indiana.....	60
Rhode Island.....	86	Maine.....	60
New York.....	84	North Dakota.....	57
Massachusetts.....	82	South Dakota.....	55
Connecticut.....	79	Nevada.....	51
Delaware.....	77	Wyoming.....	47
Pennsylvania.....	74	Montana.....	47
Illinois.....	73	Idaho.....	46
California.....	70.1	West Virginia.....	44
Ohio.....	70	Florida.....	40
Utah.....	68	Virginia.....	39
Maryland.....	68	Texas.....	35
New Hampshire.....	67	Tennessee.....	33
Wisconsin.....	67	Arizona.....	32.9
Michigan.....	65	Oklahoma.....	31
Oregon.....	64	Louisiana.....	31
Missouri.....	64	Kentucky.....	30
Vermont.....	63	Georgia.....	24
Minnesota.....	63	North Carolina.....	23
Washington.....	62	New Mexico.....	20
Nebraska.....	61	Alabama.....	19.3
Colorado.....	61	Arkansas.....	18.9
Iowa.....	61	South Carolina.....	17
Kansas.....	61	Mississippi.....	11

Statistics from N. W. Ayer & Son's *Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*, 1936.

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bringing to the citizen a first-hand acquaintance with public affairs than any other agency that exists.

The problems of government in the modern world seem distressingly complicated not only to average men but to their leaders as well. In the United States, as in the other democratic countries, the people have at their disposal instrumentalities for the control of government. The character and wisdom of these sovereign people is all important. Pessimists tell us now, as they have been telling us for the last hundred and fifty years, that the people cannot be trusted to act wisely on difficult public questions. It is true that public problems have never been so complex as in the modern period, but it is also true that the facilities by which the people can inform themselves have never been so numerous and so efficient. Many attempts are made to use the channels of communication to mislead the public, and many more such attempts will be made in the future. Their success depends upon the gullibility of the people. Fortunately, the democratic system develops individuals who are not so gullible as those who lack free access to information and a background of experience in public affairs.

XVIII

STRAW VOTES AND THE MEASUREMENT OF OPINION

WHAT are the people thinking? In the past, there has been no very accurate way of finding out. Popular elections have told us something. In fact, they have been the most authoritative expression of public opinion on political matters we have had, but they are often fought in a confused tangle of issues and personalities that leaves the popular verdict indefinite and uncertain. Between elections, pressure groups and other vocal elements in the population have tried to create an impression that public opinion was favorable to their interests. Newspapers too have often spoken as though they reflected public opinion, whereas as often as not they failed to reflect it even roughly. The interpretation of public opinion too often has become a babel of discordant voices and conflicting claims.

If a really accurate method for measuring public opinion could be devised and made use of, it would lead to a new-era of democratic control in human affairs. Within the last few years, sponsors of public opinion polls have been telling us that they are developing a dependable method of measuring public opinion. Their polls have received wide attention in connection with elections, when the element of competition is keenest and where their accuracy is most easily tested. The use of scientific methods by the polls has given them a new authoritativeness and has led to increasing discussion of their significance and their potentialities for good or evil. If the most optimistic predictions are to be accepted, we are entering upon a period when popular sovereignty will be given increased meaning.

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Straw votes are conducted by newspapers, magazines, and commercial agencies because of their interest to the general public. They are conducted by politicians because politicians must keep in close touch with the trends of public opinion if they are going to get and keep government jobs. Straw votes are interesting to the average individual because of his desire to know what is going to happen in the future. The use of a seemingly scientific technique gives an air of authority to the poll that purports to reveal the mystery of what will happen in a coming election. The average citizen also likes scores of all kinds—baseball scores, football scores, and the results of political contests. He will sit up all night to get the final election returns. By offering him an opportunity to get political scores every few days, straw polls transform the election from one game into a world series. Political fans, identifying themselves with one side or the other, can discuss the probable victor and the margin of victory with impressive evidence at their disposal. The newspapers and other promoters of polls capitalize on these popular interests by conducting polls, giving them wide publicity, and selling papers. In one process they make news, sell it, and whet the popular appetite for more. Meanwhile, the politicians watch the polls with professional interest and conduct polls of their own in order that they may keep aware of their standing with the public and plot their campaign strategy with most effectiveness.

Ever since the beginning of political parties, politicians have made it their business to keep a close check on the currents of public opinion. They have long used their party machinery in campaigns to gauge the sentiment of the voters before election. The organization extending from the local leader in the precinct to the national chairman has made it possible to make systematic estimates from time to time without the creation of

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new machinery. The precinct leader, in close touch with all the voters in his precinct, reports to the ward or district leader on sentiment there. The ward or district leader, making use of any supplementary information that he may have, and allowing for errors, reports to the county chairman. The county chairmen report to the state organization, and reports go from state to national headquarters. Such opinion estimates based on close contact with the voters and made by experienced political observers are likely to give a fairly accurate picture of the situation. When an election is close, a house-to-house canvass may be made in each precinct by the precinct captain or workers whom he hires. Voters are asked how they intend to vote, and perhaps incidentally given a line of argument for the party. This type of canvass is regarded as very reliable. The frequency and the thoroughness of the check-ups on voter sentiment made during a campaign depend to a large extent upon the closeness of the contest and the efficiency of the organization.

The general public first became widely interested in straw polls largely as a result of the publicity attending the *Literary Digest* polls, but the *Literary Digest* did not invent polls for the public. Pre-election polls on candidates had been conducted by newspapers since about 1900. In Presidential campaigns before 1900, the *New York Herald* gathered reports and estimates from all over the United States and forecast the probable electoral vote on the basis of the data obtained. Gradually this activity was expanded into systematic straw polls.¹ Other newspapers entered the straw vote field early in the century, usually by canvassing their own regions. The *Columbus Dispatch* sponsored a poll in 1906. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* entered the field of Presidential election polls in 1908 by conduct-

¹ Claude E. Robinson, *Straw Votes*, 47. Columbia University Press.

ing a poll in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and West Virginia. The *Chicago American* and the *Chicago Journal* and other papers also began sponsoring polls in this period.

When the *Literary Digest* entered the straw vote field, it soon outdistanced the newspapers in the national scope and reputation of its polls. This magazine began its polling activities in 1916 by requesting its readers to report to the magazine on sentiment in their respective communities for Woodrow Wilson and Charles E. Hughes. Labor leaders were also asked to estimate the probable direction of the labor vote, and a postal card poll was made of readers in five picked states.

In the years that followed, the *Digest* poll was greatly expanded. In 1920, eleven million ballot cards were mailed, to persons whose names were drawn principally from telephone directories, to test out the strength of leading candidates for the Presidential nomination. After the party conventions, a post card poll was conducted in California, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, and New York as the basis for a pre-election estimate. Polls on prohibition and the soldiers' bonus were conducted in 1922, and on the Mellon tax-reduction plan in 1924. In the Presidential campaign of 1924, more than sixteen million ballots were sent out to test the strength of the candidates. In 1928, eighteen million post card ballots were mailed. The *Literary Digest* poll had become a national institution.

By 1928, the editors and promoters had become quite confident of their ability to predict election outcomes. In their issue of November 3, on the eve of the election, in presenting the final returns of their poll, readers were reminded that the *Digest* had promised two months before to anticipate the news of the election by days and weeks. The poll was presented as "the greatest in history." When the results of the election followed the lines indicated by their poll, *The Literary Digest* of November 17 showed the jubilation of the editors by carrying

almost a page of "bouquets" from the press. The *Wichita Beacon* hailed the accuracy of the *Digest* poll as "uncanny." The *Philadelphia Record* called it "a remarkably correct forecast." The *New York Herald Tribune* said, "We congratulate The *Digest's* straw-gatherers once more on a prodigious success."

The Literary Digest was riding high, and capitalizing on the reputation of its polls with increased circulation. But a little cloud scarcely larger than a man's hand might even then have been seen upon the horizon, if the sponsors had been looking for clouds. Close observers of the *Digest* polls and students of public opinion were calling attention to the fact that the polls were not so accurate as they seemed. In 1932, before the election or straw poll of that year, Claude E. Robinson published a careful study of straw votes, in which he pointed out that *The Literary Digest* had overpredicated the popular vote of the winner in both the 1924 and 1928 elections, but that few states were misrepresented in the electoral college because the real election happened to be one-sided. Had the contests been close, the *Digest* error would have caused it to assign many votes to one candidate that would have been cast officially for his opponent. Mr. Robinson illustrated his contention by showing that if *The Literary Digest* had conducted a nation-wide poll in 1916 and made the same error in predicting the Hughes vote as it did in 1928 in predicting the Hoover vote, it would have forecast a victory of Charles E. Hughes over Woodrow Wilson of 342 electoral votes to 189.²

The *Digest* poll of 1932 indicated the Roosevelt victory of that year with more than the usual accuracy. This was considered a further proof of its reliability. Announcing the 1936 straw vote, the *Digest* editors said in the August 22 issue, "The Poll represents thirty years' constant evolution and perfection." As

² Claude E. Robinson, *Straw Votes*, 58, 59. Columbia University Press.

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the poll progressed, it indicated that Governor Landon would beat President Roosevelt by a substantial majority, in the face of some evidence to the contrary. *The Literary Digest*, with their past record of correct prediction in mind, remained optimistic to the last. When President Roosevelt won by the greatest margin in recent Presidential history, the *Digest* poll suffered the worst upset in straw vote history. The scientific critics were vindicated. Something was obviously wrong with the technique used. So great was the upset that a new epoch in straw poll history was ushered in with almost explosive suddenness.

Three straw polls on a national scale competed with the *Literary Digest* poll for public interest. They were those of the American Institute of Public Opinion, Archibald M. Crossley, and *Fortune* magazine. The American Institute of Public Opinion was founded in 1935 by Dr. George Gallup. Its income was derived from a group of newspapers who were given the exclusive right to publish the results of its polls. The Crossley poll was brought out during the 1936 campaign for the King Features Syndicate. The *Fortune* Quarterly Survey was developed for *Fortune* early in 1935, and has since appeared quarterly as a feature of the magazine.

These three polls were distinguished from *The Literary Digest* poll in that they were organized by trained statisticians and used statistical principles that were considered scientific. Both Dr. Gallup and Mr. Crossley had been men of considerable experience in the field of marketing research. In 1936, through their polling organizations, they applied the same research techniques that marketing experts had been using for some years when they wanted to find out whether the public preferred corn flakes or rolled oats or how much spinach of a particular brand would be used in competition with another brand.

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Whereas *The Literary Digest* proceeded on the assumption that if they sent out enough ballots their poll was almost sure to be accurate, these men used tested principles of sampling in their attempts to measure pre-election opinion as accurately as they had learned to measure the marketing tastes of the public.

The results of the 1936 election definitely established the superiority of the "scientific" polls over the older *Digest* poll. While the latter predicted a Landon victory of 370 electoral votes to 161, the Institute of Public Opinion data indicated that Roosevelt would win 477 electoral votes to 42 for Landon, with 12 doubtful. The Crossley data indicated a Roosevelt victory by 470 votes to 61. Actually, Roosevelt won 523 electoral votes to Landon's 8. In their prediction of the popular vote, the Institute and Crossley polls were in error 6.9 per cent, the *Fortune* poll 1 per cent, and *The Literary Digest* poll 19.8 per cent. The average plurality errors in the estimates of popular pluralities in the various states were Crossley 11.71 per cent, Institute 12.08 per cent, *Literary Digest* 37.14 per cent.³

The most accurate pre-election prediction of any was made by Democratic National Chairman James A. Farley, based on the information gathered by his party organization and analyzed by the party's man of graphs and charts, Mr. Emil Hurja. Chairman Farley predicted that the President would carry every state except Maine and Vermont, which turned out to be exactly right.

The New York Times of November 1, 1936, on the eve of the election, not only carried this prediction but also gave publicity to Mr. Farley's belief that Roosevelt's plurality in New York would be at least 500,000. Senator Joseph F. Guffey, of Pennsylvania, was quoted in the same item as declaring that

³ Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, "Public Opinion Polls," *Sociometry*, Vol. I (1937), 163-6.

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Roosevelt would carry Pennsylvania, that Pittsburgh would go for him, and that even the normally Republican city of Philadelphia, which voted for Hoover in 1932, would also be carried. Actually the President carried New York by more than a million votes. He also carried Pennsylvania by a substantial majority, Allegheny County, in which Pittsburgh is located, by a two to one vote, and Philadelphia County by 539,000 to 329,000.

Since politicians habitually give out optimistic statements before election, those made by the winning side may be expected to be somewhere near correct. However, Chairman Farley's exact prediction of the electoral vote in 1936 cannot be dismissed as an optimistic statement made for propaganda purposes. It was based on data gathered by a highly efficient fact-finding organization under the direction of one of the keenest students of public opinion in the country. Its superiority to the "scientific" polls probably lay in the fact that the Democratic analyzers were able to estimate the influence of party machine strength on the votes cast in a way that the commercial polls did not.

Following the election of 1936, *Fortune* and the American Institute of Public Opinion continued their polling activities, measuring public opinion on such things as the extension of the merit system, President Roosevelt's popularity, the enlargement of the Supreme Court, sit-down strikes, and freedom of the press. The American Institute of Public Opinion in particular gave publicity to its claims that its methods were scientific and its technicians constantly on the alert to improve them. Polls conducted during municipal campaigns in Detroit and New York City in 1937 tended to support such claims. Municipal elections might be expected to be more difficult of prediction than state or national elections because of the relatively greater influence wielded by party machines. Yet the Institute's poll

predicted the result in Detroit within 2 per cent and the result in New York within 4 per cent.⁴

The different straw polls have made use of different techniques, but the prime determinant of accuracy in any poll is the cross-section. All polls use some kind of sampling procedure. If the sample measured were a perfect cross-section, the poll would give a perfect picture of public opinion. As the cross-section varies from perfection, the poll varies in accuracy. The sample should contain all the population elements in the same proportion that they appear in the whole population. If it fails in this matter, any increase in the size of the poll will not eliminate the error.

The methods of sampling that have been used, or may be used, in straw polls have been classified by Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril as (1) the random sample, (2) the weighted sample, (3) the psychological poll, (4) the incidental sample. When the random sample is used, the population is sampled by a truly random method. That is, every tenth person, or every twentieth, or every fiftieth person, may be polled, the selection of individuals to be polled being made by some purely chance device, the theory being that chance will cause all types of units to be represented in the proper proportion. The weighted sample method chooses a sample intended to be a typical cross-section not by chance but by a study of the significant elements in the population and a deliberate choice of samples of each of these elements in the proper proportion. The psychological poll used by *Fortune* is a variation of this technique. The incidental sampling procedure of *The Literary Digest* was an unscientific method that depended on size rather than the polling of a typical cross-section for accuracy.⁵

⁴ George Gallup, "Public Opinion in Our Cities," *National Municipal Review*, Vol. XXVII (1938), 70.

⁵ Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, "Public Opinion Polls," *Sociometry*, Vol. I (1937), 157-61.

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The poll of the American Institute of Public Opinion is the best known of the weighted sample polls, although the Crossley poll of 1936 also made use of this technique. The Institute uses six controls to assure a typical cross-section. "The sample must contain the proper proportion of (1) voters from each state, (2) men and women, (3) farm voters and voters in towns of 2,500 population or less, 2,500 to 10,000, 10,000 to 100,000, 100,000 to 500,000 and 500,000 and over, (4) voters of all age groups, (5) voters of above-average and below-average incomes as well as persons on relief, and (6) Democrats, Republicans, and members of other parties."⁶ The actual number of persons in each of these groups is obtained by consulting statistical sources such as census reports, election returns, and government and private statistics on incomes.

The distribution of ballots in the proper proportion is, of course, not enough to insure that an accurate cross-section will be obtained. The crux of the matter is that the ballots must be in the right proportion when they are counted. Because of this, the method by which ballots are collected is almost as important as the determination of what constitutes a proper cross-section in the first place. Experience shows that less than a fifth of mailed ballots will be returned, and those returned will not constitute a typical cross-section of the population. People with intense opinions, people who ardently favor a change, people in the higher income groups are the ones who will return their ballots in the greatest proportion. In order to counteract this overbalancing influence, the American Institute of Public Opinion has made extensive use of interviewers to obtain votes. Mail ballots have been used for some classes, but the proper balance has been assured by supplementing votes obtained in this way with votes obtained by the

⁶*The New Science of Public Opinion Measurement*, a pamphlet published by the American Institute of Public Opinion, 9.

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Institute's interviewers. The latter method has been depended upon particularly in farming communities, relief districts, and working class areas.

The psychological polling method used by *Fortune* in 1936 differed both in the way in which the sample was chosen and in the conception of what constituted an adequate sample. In this poll, no attempt was made to secure a statistically reliable cross-section of the population. Instead, *Fortune* attempted to poll a few typical voters so carefully selected that they would be characteristic of their respective groups, and therefore one person's opinion could be taken as representative of that of thousands of people. Only 4,500 people were polled in the whole United States. This was a sample of about one hundredth of one per cent of the voting electorate.⁷

In the *Fortune* method, everything hinges on the determination of the composition of the sample and on the accurate selection of typical voters. In the poll of 1936, five population groups were taken into consideration: age, sex, geographical divisions, rural-urban division, and economic classes. Interviewers who were to pick and interview the persons polled were picked with great care. An interviewer was required to be a resident of the community he was to survey, and to be well recommended. He was required to make a thorough study of his community and select his cases with consideration both for their objective status and their psychological identifications. For instance, a man on a relatively small salary might identify himself psychologically with capital rather than with labor because of his background or associations or because he owned two hundred dollars worth of stock in the Standard Oil Company. In such a case, the psychological status was recognized

⁷ Material on the *Fortune* poll in this and the following paragraph is based on Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, "Public Opinion Polls," *Sociometry*, Vol. I (1937), 161.

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as being more important than the economic status. The *Fortune* poll made further use of recognized psychological principles by providing for an expression of opinion about President Roosevelt on a four-step attitude scale rather than taking only a "yes" and "no" vote. In this way, intensity of opinion could be taken into consideration.

The Literary Digest used an incidental method of sampling that has been outmoded by the more recently developed scientific methods. The *Digest* maintained a huge mailing list of names originally taken mainly from telephone directories and later supplemented by automobile registration lists, and to a certain extent by other lists. The promoters were interested in sending ballots to potential subscribers, as well as in taking an adequate straw poll. Their list constituted about as complete a list of potential subscribers in the United States as any magazine could obtain. And along with the ballots was sent out advertising material. Sheer size was depended on mainly to give an accurate forecast. The *Digest* took pride in the fact that its straw poll was the largest ever attempted. Their debacle in 1936 called dramatic attention to the fact that the representative nature rather than the size of the cross-section is the important factor. The *Digest* list was weighted toward the upper income level, and its polls repeatedly showed that it over-represented Republican party strength.

After the election results of 1936 revealed the demise of its straw poll as a respected election prophet, *The Literary Digest*, in its issue of November 14, discussed the reasons for its great upset. In answer to the criticism that they had not reached the lower strata of voters, the editors declared that they had reached these voters in certain cities. In Chicago, every third registered voter was polled. In Scranton, Pennsylvania, every other registered voter was polled. In Allentown, Pennsylvania, every registered voter was polled. The *Digest* poll in those cities

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failed to predict the outcome of the real election with a margin of error practically as great as that in the complete poll. This would seem to demonstrate that the method used in collecting ballots was an even greater weakness in the polling technique than the unscientific sample chosen in the first place. All of the *Digest* ballots were sent and returned by mail. In cases where all the voters in a particular city were polled by mail, the ballots did not come back in the same proportions in which the voters cast their votes at the polls. Landon supporters returned the mail ballots in greater numbers than did the Roosevelt supporters. Obviously, balloting by mail cannot be depended upon to furnish a typical sample of the voters who will go to the polls in the real election.

Recent developments in the straw poll field have led to closer scrutiny and increased discussion of the accuracy of straw polls. Elections furnish the most obvious test of the accuracy of such polls, and about the only test that can commonly be applied. For practical purposes, the accuracy of the straw poll is measured by comparing its returns with the returns of the official election. If we think in terms of absolutes, this standard is not wholly satisfactory. The straw poll may measure public opinion more accurately than the election, because an election is only a more or less rough approximation of public opinion. Between 30 and 50 per cent of the people of voting age usually do not vote in official elections. The official election is itself only a sample, and not necessarily representative of a typical cross-section of the adult population. However, elections provide our most authoritative expressions of public opinion, and for most of us they furnish the only check on the accuracy of straw polls that is definite enough to seem even approximately reliable.

After the Presidential election of 1936, the techniques used by the scientific polls were examined and discussed by various

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observers, who tried to discover the explanation for their failure to predict the election results more accurately. *Fortune's* forecast, coming within 1 per cent of the final popular vote, was accurate enough to be satisfactory, but its sample was, from a statistical point of view, much too small. Further tests were considered necessary to establish the reliability of the *Fortune* method. On the other hand, the poll of the American Institute of Public Opinion and the Crossley poll failed to produce highly accurate predictions, in spite of their elaborate techniques.

After the election, the magazine *Business Week*, in commenting on the American Institute and Crossley polls, suggested that marketing men who rely on the same men and the same methods in determining sales strategy would want to know why and how they had found two answers, and with considerable variation, in their pre-election predictions. The editors suggested that a chief factor that made election prediction difficult was the inability of the statisticians to measure the percentage of sentiment that would be translated into effective votes when high-powered party machines made their finishing drives.⁸

Other observers have suggested other possible causes of error.⁹ The first place to which we look for inaccuracy is in the sample. The selection of factors that are to be used in weighting the sample is one of the most difficult as well as one of the most important problems involved in straw polling. The scientific polls were not in complete agreement in the factors that they used. Once the factors, such as economic status, age, occupation, and previous political affiliation, have been decided upon, there is still the difficult task of estimating the proper

⁸ "Post-Election Straws," *Business Week*, November 14, 1936, 21, 22.

⁹ See Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, "Public Opinion Polls," *Sociometry*, Vol. I (1937), 168-70.

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ratios within certain groups. For example, it is difficult to calculate the percentage of voters in the different income brackets. In 1936, all the straw polls probably underestimated the number of voters in the low-income groups who would go to the polls. The development of accurate samples will require continued study and experimentation.

Additional inaccuracy in the 1936 polls may have grown out of the nature of such polls as samples of a sample.¹⁰ Only about 60 per cent of the persons of voting age voted in the official election. The managers of straw polls had no way of knowing what percentage of the people would vote or which ones would be in that percentage. They probably underestimated the number of those who failed to vote in 1932 who would in 1936 turn out to vote for Roosevelt because of the issues involved or the loyalties stirred by that election. They may also have underestimated the importance of the new voters. A further factor that may have been significant was the failure of the polls, with the exception of *Fortune*, to measure the intensity of the voter's attitude. Voters who were strongly favorable to Roosevelt or bitterly opposed to him would be much more likely to vote and get the members of their families and their friends out to vote than would be those whose feeling was less intense.

Scientific straw polling in the field of politics was in its infancy in 1936. The techniques, as we have noticed, were largely taken over from the field of marketing research. The technique of sampling in the latter field was pretty well perfected, but sampling in a political campaign offered new problems and required a modification of technique. Modifications in technique were made with a degree of success that may be considered reasonably satisfactory in view of the newness of the

¹⁰ Archibald M. Crossley, "Straw Polls in 1936," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. I (January, 1937), 25.

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endeavor. We may expect that increased accuracy will come with increased experience and experimentation. However, the complex political factors involved in pre-election campaigns may make it impossible for statisticians ever to develop the same degree of accuracy in predicting results that they have achieved in the field of marketing research.

Although pre-election polls have aroused most interest in the measurement of public opinion, polls of opinion on issues of general concern have become increasingly common. The American Institute of Public Opinion, which furnishes frequent releases reporting the public's views on current questions to the newspapers subscribing to its service, considers this function more important than forecasting election results. As polling in this field continues and the technique improves, such polls will probably gain increased respect and may come to serve with increased effectiveness as channels through which public opinion will control public policies.

One of the pioneer students of straw polls has recently called attention to four interpretative principles that must guide us in our evaluation of issue polls.¹¹

1. The returns from such polls must be interpreted with reference to the phrasing of the issue. For instance, a mayor engaged in using strong-arm tactics to keep labor organizers out of his city might conduct a poll on the question, "Do you favor keeping the Reds out of our city?" and claim vindication when his fellow citizens cast an overwhelming vote in the affirmative. Such a question would have a very different meaning from one worded, "Do you favor the principle of collective bargaining for labor?" or "Do you favor the principles enumerated in the Bill of Rights?" Partisan sponsors may try to bring out the response they want by adroit wording of the

¹¹ Claude E. Robinson, "Recent Developments in the Straw-Poll Field—Part 2," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. I (October, 1937), 44, 45.

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question. Issue polls should be conducted on questions impartially constructed and so worded that they will draw a significant line of cleavage in public opinion.

2. Returns from issue polls as commonly conducted furnish a measure of the quantity of opinion on a numerical basis of "yeses" and "noes." They do not measure intensity or effectiveness of opinion. The American Institute of Public Opinion, for example, has recorded a large majority of the people as favoring legalization of the distribution of birth-control information and opposing the continuance of the spoils system of making governmental appointments. But the continuance, with relatively little popular protest, of the ban on birth-control information and of the spoils system indicates that a numerical minority may easily sway the public when the majority is only lukewarm in its opinions.

3. Returns on specific issues close to the common experience of the people are more significant than returns on general or complex questions. A vote on the continuance of relief or on the desirability of legislation against child labor is more significant than a vote on the gold content of the dollar or the continuance of the American Neutrality Act. If people are going to vote "yes" or "no" on an issue, they must have some fairly clear conception about what they are voting on if their verdict is to have any significance.

4. Returns from issue polls must be interpreted with reference to possible shifts of opinion that may have occurred after the poll was taken. Opinion in some fields is more stable than others, but in any field, developments after the collection of straw ballots may lead to shifts of opinion considerable enough to affect the validity of the poll. Those who favored American entrance into the League of Nations a few years ago may oppose such a course now. Those who favored one neutrality policy for the United States last year may favor another policy this

year. On current questions, the results of opinion polls must be fresh if they are to reflect the contemporary mind of the people.

Public opinion polls contain possibilities of harm as well as good and have been hailed in some quarters as an evil that should be abolished. Shortly after the election of 1936, Senator McKellar of Tennessee called for a senatorial investigation of *The Literary Digest* poll. He asserted that Landon supporters had lost enormous sums of money betting on the campaign as a result of the *Digest* poll, and that hundreds of thousands of voters had been led to vote for Landon in the hope that they would get on the bandwagon. The Senator favored the enactment of a law that would require any newspaper or magazine conducting such a poll to be supervised by a bipartisan federal board composed of citizens of high ability and unquestionable honesty. Although this proposal did not result in any legislation, the feeling of disapproval and suspicion that it reflected was a feeling common to many people at the time.

The contention that pre-election straw polls foster the bandwagon psychology is one of the most common charges brought against them. Whether or not straw polls actually have any considerable influence of this kind is a debatable question. It may be that such influence will increase as the polls become more highly respected. However, in the 1936 election, the poll of *The Literary Digest* was the one with the best-established reputation, and it certainly did not have any considerable bandwagon influence. Some have even asserted that it had an opposite effect, that Roosevelt voters were stirred to vote in greater numbers because the *Digest* poll showed Landon ahead. Possibly in elections when opinion was not deeply influenced by more important factors, a poll would have enough

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bandwagon influence to be noticeable and objectionable, but as yet the power of a poll in that direction is undetermined.

In an editorial on November 13, 1936, *The New York Times* brought a more serious charge against straw polls. It was contended that issue polls would tend to intensify the bandwagon instinct in legislators. If they were told that 62 per cent of the people favored payment of the soldiers' bonus or 65 per cent favored killing the World Court treaty, the desire of many of them to be re-elected would lead them to respond to such statistics by voting for or against a measure not because they considered it wise or stupid, but because they wanted to be in accord with what was pictured to them as the will of the electorate. The *Times* declared that the American government was not meant to function on such a pattern, and said, "Ours is a 'representative' democracy, in which it is properly assumed that those who are chosen to be 'representatives' will think for themselves, use their best judgment individually and take the unpopular side of an argument whenever they are sincerely convinced that the unpopular side is in the long run in the best interests of the country." Public opinion polls, then, were regarded as a serious threat to the principle of representative government.

Another potential danger of great seriousness lies in the possibility that such polls may be fraudulently manipulated or made to serve a propaganda purpose. No careful student of public opinion has ever accused the agencies who conducted the great national straw polls of 1936 of dishonesty or manipulation. But those who conduct polls of public opinion that receive wide publicity and are accorded general respect "are dealing with instruments of power." The people respect statistics, and unscrupulous pollers of opinion may use this fact for propaganda purposes. Aside from the danger of fraudulent manipu-

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lation, there are various ways by which these techniques may be subtly used to serve a private rather than a public interest. Questions may be selected and phrased with a propaganda purpose in mind, or the polls may be so timed or the statistical treatment of the results be so handled as to constitute effective propaganda for the cause of the promoters.¹² In the case of issue polls, the danger is particularly great because there is no obvious way in which we can check their accuracy. Before polls can realize their maximum possibilities of influence and service to the people, some method, governmental or otherwise, will have to be devised to guarantee the integrity and ability of the promoters and the validity of their results.

Over against the adverse criticism of straw polls and the possible dangers inherent in them may be set certain significant advantages and possibilities of social usefulness.

In answer to the criticism that straw polls threaten to destroy representative government by making the will of the people seem obvious to their representatives and frightening them into following the popular will regardless of their own better judgment, the friends of straw polls assert that legislators have always watched opinion among their constituents and tried to follow it. Public opinion polls will provide them with an accurate technique for measuring opinion. They will no longer be forced to rely on old haphazard methods of gauging opinion with the likelihood of being fooled by noisy minorities and pressure groups.

In the sense that they will contribute to the control of government by public opinion, straw polls will undoubtedly lead to increasingly democratic government if they continue to develop in prestige and influence. Our political system has thus

¹² Harwood L. Childs, "Rule by Public Opinion," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLVII (1936), 762, 763.

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far been unsatisfactory in that elections have allowed for a verdict that was often indefinite and, in almost any case, only a rough approximation of opinion. When an American votes, there is no certain way of telling whether he is voting for a candidate or an issue or something else. Then, between elections, the voters have no way of making their opinions known except by very unsatisfactory methods, such as participation in pressure groups. Elected officials may grossly misrepresent the people. A President and Congress elected in the same landslide and controlled by the same party may fight each other like cats and dogs, each claiming all the while to represent the will of the people. The sponsors of public opinion polls hope that such polls can be developed to the point where they will remove such uncertainty and make possible a definite measurement of popular opinion on matters of general interest and a continuous connection between representatives and the will of the people, which they are supposed to represent.

As the scientific measurement of opinion becomes generally accepted, public officials and the people themselves will probably become more critical toward pressure groups that pretend to speak for the public and less likely to take their claims at face value. Already there is some evidence of such an influence. The Townsend movement furnishes a good example. A few years ago it descended upon the government with much show of strength with its demand for pensions of \$200 a month for persons over sixty. Townsend Clubs were formed all over the United States to spread the new gospel of plenty and bring pressure to bear on governmental representatives. Congressmen shivered in their boots, fearful of the strength of this incorporated octopus in pursuit of the millennium. But presently the American Institute of Public Opinion took a poll of Townsend sentiment and revealed that only 3.8 per cent of the voters

were in favor of the Townsend plan. Congressmen pulled themselves together, an investigation of the movement was launched, and the octopus disappeared in the sunlight.

The experience of the American Institute of Public Opinion tends to indicate that government by public opinion would be more progressive and more enlightened than the policies pursued by the people's representatives. For instance, the Institute's poll on the establishment of the merit system in the government service indicated that 88 per cent of the people favored the merit system as opposed to the spoils system. A poll on the question as to whether or not amendments to the federal Constitution should be submitted to the voters themselves revealed that 82 per cent of the voters favored this method of ratification. Dr. Gallup, the director, concludes that the experience of the Institute absolutely supports Theodore Roosevelt's assertion that, "The majority of the *plain people* of the United States will, day in and day out, make fewer mistakes in governing themselves than any smaller group of men will make in trying to govern them."¹³ If public opinion polls establish this fact and in the meantime help to make popular sovereignty increasingly effective, they will contribute much to the science of good government.

To the social scientist, opinion polls offer at least two other possibilities of usefulness that may be mentioned. One is in the opportunity that they afford for the evaluation of techniques of attitude research. Psychologists have for some time been developing methods of research in this field, and although their technique is more complicated than that of the conductor of the typical opinion poll, the development of accuracy and the improvement of methodology in one field will undoubtedly prove helpful to the other. Another field of usefulness to the

¹³ George Gallup, "Public Opinion in Our Cities," *National Municipal Review*, Vol. XXVII (1938), 71, 103.

social scientist is in the revelation of particular group opinions. A poll of liberal Americans by *The Nation* in 1938 revealed that they were overwhelmingly opposed to a national policy of isolation in foreign affairs. Pre-election polls by student newspapers in 1936 indicated that the students of Vassar and Princeton favored Governor Landon by considerable majorities, whereas the faculties of these schools were for President Roosevelt. At the same time, students at the College of the City of New York voted overwhelmingly for President Roosevelt, with Earl Browder second, Norman Thomas third, and Governor Landon fourth. Although these polls were all unscientific and perhaps far from accurate in their estimates of opinion, they furnish interesting food for thought and for future research.

Continued experimentation and experience with opinion polls will undoubtedly lead to improvements in technique. In order to be of most value in the measurement of opinion on social problems and issues, polls must develop methods of measuring the factors other than numbers which affect opinion. Intensity of opinion, organization, and knowledge are important factors that a "yes" and "no" poll fails to measure. In the field of the measurement of intensity of opinion, we may profit by the technique of the psychologists who have experimented with the measurement of attitudes on a graded scale.

Psychologists think of attitudes as being reflected through verbalizing tendencies more or less favorable or unfavorable toward certain objects, situations, persons, or things. It follows that attitudes can be measured by measuring willingness to accept certain verbalized statements. They attempt to measure attitudes by developing a scale that runs from one extreme of attitude to its opposite. This scale is composed of statements representing different degrees of favorable or unfavorable attitude. The statements are given their proper place on the scale after being tried out on a considerable number of

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persons.¹⁴ An example of a scale of this kind is that used by Professor Verner M. Sims for the measurement of attitude toward the Tennessee Valley Authority. His scale contains twenty-three statements representing various degrees of favorableness or unfavorableness toward the TVA. By administering this scale to 1,150 college students and 824 adults, he was able to obtain a measurement of attitude, and a basis for the comparison of attitudes of different groups, much more accurate and significant than would have been a poll on the question "Are you for or against the TVA?"¹⁵

Psychologists have found that on many questions opinion does not divide into definite groups. Attitudes "for" and "against" may range in a gradual curve from one extreme to the other. In such a case, a simple "for" or "against" poll is as misleading as would be an arbitrary separation of the population into persons above six feet in height and persons below that height as a measure of the height of people in a particular area.

On other questions, such as attitudes of white people toward Negroes, there seem to be two clearly discernible peaks of attitude.¹⁶ This is apparently true in elections. Such being the case, pre-election straw polls may be about as useful as more elaborate attitude polls. At any rate, they force the voter to do what he has to do in the official election, make a definite choice, and therefore probably furnish a reasonably satisfactory basis for the prediction of elections.

The attitudes tests of the psychologists have been used mainly on college students, and their length and complexity may make

¹⁴ For a more detailed explanation of this technique, see Gardner Murphy, Lois B. Murphy, Theodore M. Newcomb, *Experimental Social Psychology*, Chapter 13. Harper & Brothers.

¹⁵ Verner Martin Sims, "Factors Influencing Attitude Toward the TVA," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. XXXIII (1938), 34-56.

¹⁶ V. M. Sims and J. R. Patrick, "Attitude toward the Negro of Northern and Southern College Students," *The Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. VII (1936), 192-204.

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widespread and general use of them impractical. However, it may be found practical to make more extensive use of the principle of the graduated scale in a simplified form. The *Fortune* poll has already used this principle on some of its subjects. The fact is inescapable that any attempted measurement of opinion that fails to show intensity as well as numbers is seriously inadequate. Other factors that help to determine the effectiveness of opinion should also be considered, but numbers and intensity are the most important and probably the most susceptible of measurement.

Public opinion polls are a phenomenon of the modern age that have developed and thrived because of their interest and usefulness to many different kinds of people. Beginning in the use of rather crude and unscientific methods, they have finally reached a stage of scientific technique that, although far from perfect, seems to point the way toward increasing improvement and increasing usefulness. Although the most optimistic hopes of their sponsors will probably not be realized, public opinion polls bid fair to become an important and generally wholesome instrumentality of popular control of public affairs.

XIX

SECTIONALISM

THROUGHOUT the whole history of the United States, sectionalism has played an important part in shaping public opinion and the progress of events. There have been three great divisions, the Northeast, the West, and the South. At times, the West and the East have been aligned against each other, "the East" meaning the Northeast. At other times, the dominant division has been the South against the North, "the North" in this sense being predominantly the Northeast. These divisions result mainly from the economic interests that predominate in different geographical areas. The conflict between West and East is a conflict between agrarian and industrial interests. That between the South and the North is, to use an expression of the Beards, a conflict between Cotton and Capitalism. Some differences in racial stock and in environment have further accentuated the divisions.

Sectional-economic influence has been plainly evident in political party groupings. James Madison pointed out in the Constitutional Convention, where a lot of noise was made over the differences between big and little states, that the most important difference between states was not that of size but of economic interests. At the country's beginning under the Constitution, three sectional divisions were already evident. There were the North Atlantic coast section, in which business interests predominated, the grain-growing back country, and the South. Thomas Jefferson allied the grain-growing back country with the South to form an overwhelmingly strong political party. Later, as the issue of slavery came to overshadow

all others, the grain growers, that is the West, and the Northeast drew together against the South. After the Civil War, the West and the Northeast remained wedded in the Republican party, but it was an unhappy marriage, for the economic interests of the two sections were generally in conflict. The result was a constant series of western insurrections within the party and a feeling of widespread dissatisfaction. In 1912, Woodrow Wilson was elected President because of a Republican split. In 1916, he was re-elected because the West joined with the South in supporting him. In 1932, all the western states went for Franklin D. Roosevelt. The West has always held the balance of political power. No party has ever been able to dominate the national scene without its support.

Important as sectionalism has been in political party history, its influence has not been confined to that field. Culture varies by regions. Race problems are largely sectional. The degree of hostility or welcome accorded new ideas varies in different sections of the country.

Each section tends to be somewhat provincial in its outlook and to emphasize its own importance. The New Englander thinks of the United States in terms of New England. To the New Yorker, the United States is mostly New York, Pennsylvania, and a few little dormitory states, such as New Jersey. To the southerner, the Garden of Eden and the center of culture is in the South, surrounded by a critical and vindictive North. To the West, the problems of the nation are mainly farm problems.

On the other hand, a number of significant forces have exerted an important unifying influence on the country. The same magazines are read all over the United States. Certain great newspapers exert a widespread influence, and the development of newspaper chains has contributed further to the standardization of news presentation. Educational institutions from

kindergarten to universities have tended to become more and more alike all over the country. In the pre-war days, chautauquas brought to the people of towns, big and little throughout the United States, the same kind of speakers and entertainers. Today the radio makes it possible for everybody from Maine to California to hear the same speakers, entertainers, and advertisements. The major political parties have always softened the asperities of sectional disagreements. In the case of the slavery issue, they failed to prevent the Civil War, but they did manage to bring about compromises that delayed its coming for years. Sectional interests and sectional viewpoints persist, but a common national feeling and common cultural forces bind the people of all sections together in a union to which all are wholeheartedly loyal and in which, since the Civil War, there has never been any thought of other than peaceful adjustment of sectional differences.

In a number of ways, the Northeast is the most powerful of the sections. Although any classification of states into regions must be more or less arbitrary, we may include in this section, as do Odum and Moore, in *American Regionalism*, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, and the six New England states. This region is dominant in finance and banking and in the manufacturing industries. Of perhaps more direct importance to the student of public opinion than this kind of dominance, although not unconnected with it, is the pre-eminence of the Northeast in education and other public-opinion shaping resources. Of the ten or a dozen universities in the United States that rank first in scholarly eminence, six are in this region.¹ Practically all of the intellectual magazines with national circulation are published here. A larger percentage of the best newspapers in the country come

¹ See Edwin R. Embree, "In Order of Their Eminence," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLV (1935), 652-64.

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from this region than from any other. Intellectually, as well as financially, the Northeast leads the United States.

This region has long been dominated largely by business and financial interests. Its attitude toward national and local questions has reflected this dominance. However, because of the numbers and power of organized labor, particularly in the metropolitan areas, this has not led to unchecked rule by the capitalists. The average of these states in social legislation and in measures favorable to labor compares very well with that of any other section. The rise in New York of such liberal leaders as Roosevelt, Wagner, and La Guardia is evidence of the power of people who are neither economic royalists nor their satellites. Similarly, Pennsylvania leaders in recent years have shown themselves particularly solicitous of the welfare and good will of the coal miners of the state. Labor and capital are both powerful forces in shaping public opinion and determining the course of politics in this area.

New England is a part of the Northeast that is, in some respects, a separate region in interest and outlook. For nearly two centuries there was little infusion of new blood into the population, and Harvard College set the intellectual tone for the region. Intellectually and biologically, New Englanders lived to themselves and considered themselves superior to the people of other regions. Work and thrift and a certain amount of snobbishness were characteristics that were theirs by inheritance from the Puritans. In recent years, immigrants from Europe have pressed in upon them. The Irish names in Massachusetts politics indicate that the old aristocracy no longer has a monopoly on political power. But throughout New England as a whole, the people of old American stock set the tone of public opinion. As a group, they are shrewd, provincial, and conservative. Maine and Vermont dramatized the conservatism of the region by their steadfast loyalty to orthodox

Republicanism in 1936, when every other state in the Union was voting for the re-election of a New Deal Democratic President, a loyalty that was a result perhaps partially of the comparatively small flow of federal money into that area, but was also a result of the inherent rugged individualism of the old New England stock.

The Northeast has always made use of the national government as far as possible to protect its economic interests. When the tariff bill of 1828 was under consideration, a prominent Massachusetts manufacturer wrote to Daniel Webster about the bill and certain amendments that had been added to it. "New England would reap a great harvest" from its passage, he declared. And he added, "*This bill if adopted as amended will keep the South and West in debt to New England the next hundred years.*"² Since the Civil War, the tariff has been raised time after time for the benefit of the Northeast, and at the insistence of the eastern interests who controlled the long-dominant Republican party. Of less importance but equally sectional in benefits conferred was the long rain of pensions to Union veterans that began before the Civil War was over and was steadily increased for many years. In 1937, when a wages-and-hours bill was under consideration and sectional interests were being reflected in senatorial attitudes, we find one of the most prominent easterners, Senator Lodge, saying, "I voted for this bill because I regard it as a step in the right direction. It will, if enforced, stop once and for all the flight of industry from Massachusetts to places where labor is cheap and sweat-shops prevail."³

The attitude of easterners toward westerners has long been something like that of an Englishman toward colonials. Some-

² Quoted in Walter Prescott Webb, *Divided We Stand*, 18, 19. Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.

³ *Congressional Record*, December 17, 1937, 75th Congress, 2d Session, 1718.

times it shows itself in a kind of unconscious contempt, such as that reflected in Chairman James A. Farley's belittling reference to Kansas in 1936 as a "typical prairie state." At other times it finds more violent expression.

Eastern leaders have on occasion expressed hostility to representation of western interests in Congress on an equality with their own representation. In the Constitutional Convention of 1787, Gouverneur Morris, of Pennsylvania, expressed a fear that the western people would eventually outnumber those of the Atlantic states. "He wished therefore to put it in the power of the latter to keep a majority of votes in their own hands." Of the West he said, "Among other objections it must be apparent they would not be able to furnish men equally enlightened, to share in the administration of our common interests. The Busy haunts of men not the remote wilderness, was the proper School of political Talents. If the Western people get the power into their hands they will ruin the Atlantic interests. The Back members are always most averse to the best measures."⁴

In 1929, when East and West were clashing over provisions to be written into a tariff bill, Mr. Joseph R. Grundy, leading tariff lobbyist, likewise from Pennsylvania, expressed views similar to those of Gouverneur Morris. Referring to southern and western states, he declared to a Senate committee investigating lobbying that "if volume of voice in the Senate were proportioned to population, productive power or the total sum contributed to the national upkeep, some of those States which are now most vocal would need amplifiers to make their whispers heard." When asked by Senator Caraway if he would decide representation in the Senate by wealth instead of by states, he replied, "I would not say wealth—but national interest. I think these Western Senators should talk darn small.

⁴ *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, ed. by Max Farrand, Vol. I, 571, 583. Yale University Press.

I don't think they ought to have as much to say as Pennsylvania." ⁵

In the course of the debate on the tariff bill, Senator Norris called attention to a cartoon that had appeared in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* of October 31, 1929. It was a map purporting to show the way Mr. Grundy would draw the United States. The East was designated "important," the South "unimportant," the West, which was confined to California, was labeled "too much Johnson," the Northwest was designated as being "unmentionable," the Central West was "impossible."

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, Josiah Quincy expressed the view of the die-hard Federalists of the East when he thundered in Congress against the creation of new states from this region, declaring, "You have no authority to throw the rights and prosperity of this people into the 'hotch-potch' with the wild men on the Missouri. . . ." ⁶ In 1929, Senator George H. Moses referred to western insurgent Senators as "sons of the wild jackass" and expressed his keen indignation at their attempts to write a tariff bill that he thought would be injurious to the interests of New England. ⁷

As a leading progressive state, Wisconsin sometimes draws a special reaction. A prominent Jewish politician, for some time treasurer of the state, tells that he visited a friend of his own race in New York after his election, and the following conversation took place.

The *New Yorker* said, "I am proud of you Sol, the only Jew treasurer of a state in the United States—if only it was some other state than Wisconsin."

"Why, what's wrong with Wisconsin?" asked Sol.

⁵ *The Literary Digest*, Vol. CIII, November 16, 1929, 12.

⁶ Quoted in Howard W. Odum and Harry Estill Moore, *American Regionalism*, 511, 512. Henry Holt & Company.

⁷ *The Literary Digest*, Vol. CIII, November 23, 1929, 10.

"Bolsheviks! Free-lovers! Pro-Germans!" exploded the New Yorker.

Because of its position of leadership, the Northeast has impressed its ideas upon the United States as a whole more than any other section. It has labeled as fools, visionaries, radicals, or demagogues those who have advocated measures that would disturb its interests. William Jennings Bryan and Robert M. La Follette have been among the outstanding modern statesmen so classified. Similarly, the movements of agrarian revolt that swept the country in the period between the Civil War and the New Deal were heaped with scorn. So great has been the influence of the East that its labels have been widely accepted, particularly in business and intellectual circles, throughout the whole country.

The place of the West in American development has long been recognized as highly significant. There has always been a "West," but as settlers pushed on first toward the Mississippi and then toward the Pacific, the part of the country considered "the West" moved with them. At first the back country in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, was "the West," then Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Missouri inherited the title, to be succeeded in turn by the region beyond. Today the designation is applied in somewhat relative fashion. To a New Yorker, for instance, Ohio is a middle western state, but to a Missourian it is part of the East. The passage of time has given the states that were the old West more and more of the characteristics of the East. "Sons of the wild jackass" no longer come, as they once did, from such states as Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, and "the wild men on the Missouri" are relatively tame. With the possible exception of Wisconsin and Minnesota, the states most characteristically western begin now with the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma.

But the chief importance of the West is not so much its geographical location as the characteristics and attitudes of the people who have made it and given it significance.

Democracy has always been one of the distinguishing characteristics of the West. In frontier communities, all persons were on an equal footing, with each expected to stand on his own achievements rather than on those of his ancestors. After the first thrill of adventure from migration to new territory had subsided, life was often dull and difficult, and only those who worked hard could succeed. More often than not, success was measured in terms of the ability to make money, but the pioneers and their sons were anxious for their children to have an education and they established public schools, church colleges, and state universities that were open to all at a minimum cost. There were differences in status, but they were based on individual character and accomplishments rather than on birth or tradition. In the field of politics, the westerners believed in majority rule, which the eastern aristocrats scornfully called "King Numbers." Manhood suffrage was a natural product of the West.

Individualism is another traditional characteristic of western people. The men and women who leave an old and settled country to migrate to a new one are likely to be the individualists of the community. They are the ones least bound by social ties. Those who went west commonly took homesteads of a hundred and sixty acres or more. Land held by speculators and left idle sometimes increased the distance between neighbors. In certain regions, settlers came not only from different states in the Union but from foreign countries as well. In such cases, an additional barrier to sociability was raised. On weekdays, both men and women stuck to their work, and on Sundays they did not go to church as commonly as the people of New England or the South. They were "free American

citizens" who felt dependent on nobody but themselves. As a region became more thickly populated, conditions modified this feeling, but seldom completely obliterated it.

The West has always been more progressive than the older sections of the country. Political innovations looked upon with settled hostility in the East have held no terrors for the West. Manhood suffrage became popular first in the western region in the period when the Jacksonian democratic revolution was in the making. Women were first given the privilege of voting in the Territory of Wyoming in 1869. Woman suffrage was continued after the Territory became a state in 1890. By 1914, eleven states, all of them in the West, had given women equal voting privileges with men. The western states were also the first to adopt the initiative and referendum for ordinary legislation. The first six states to take this step were South Dakota, Utah, Oregon, Nevada, Montana, and Oklahoma. Another contribution of the West was the idea of railroad rate regulation, an idea that first found its way into state legislation in the decade from 1870 to 1880. More recently, Nebraska has carried on the pioneering tradition of the West with the establishment of a unicameral legislature. Certain states, chief among which is Wisconsin, have gained a particular reputation for progressive legislation of various kinds. An equally progressive position has been reflected in national politics. For the last fifty years the outstanding leaders of the region have been such men as Norris, the La Follettes, Dolliver, Kenyon, Bryan, Walsh, Borah, Costigan, Capper, and Cutting.

The West has been in a state of almost chronic discontent during most of the time since the Civil War. The period of falling prices that followed the war was particularly hard on the farmers because it forced down the value of their produce and made more difficult the payment of interest on the mortgages on their farms. Five-cent butter, ten-cent corn, and

fifty-cent wheat would hardly pay the cost of production, to say nothing of the interest payments that must continue going to eastern mortgage-holders. As the farmer warmed himself with heat from his burning corn in the kitchen stove, fuel that was cheaper than coal, he grew steadily more resentful at the system that held him entangled in its meshes.

Overproduction contributed to his woes; but worst of all was the complex middleman organization that sucked away his profits as an electric milker drains the udder of a cow. Railroads, elevators, and stockyards all charged exorbitant prices. In the seventies, it cost twenty cents a bushel to ship wheat across northern Illinois from the Mississippi river to Chicago and fifty-seven and one-half cents to send it from the Iowa border to the seacoast, whereas corn that brought fifteen cents a bushel in the Middle West sold for more than seventy cents in New York.⁸

Resentment at their exploitation led the farmers into successive political revolts. They had become aware that they would have to organize and use their voting strength as a unit if they were to exert any considerable influence in politics. They would have to wrest power from the hands of machine politicians under the control of capitalistic interests that bought and sold senatorships and judgeships and legislative votes as they would buy and sell wheat or corn. Organization for agrarian revolt came with the Granger and Greenback movements of the seventies, to be followed by Populism in the eighties and nineties, and the Non-Partisan League Movement beginning in 1915.

These movements marked a drift away from Jacksonian individualism toward a collectivist conception of the functions of

⁸ John D. Hicks, "The Development of Civilization in the Middle West, 1860-1890," *Sources of Culture in the Middle West*, ed. by Dixon Ryan Fox, 89. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

the state. Hard times had forced the farmers to accept the view that they should make use of the government to help them as the business men had long made use of it to further their interests. The farmers demanded such things as monetary reforms, a graduated income tax, a democratic banking system, government ownership of railroads, standardization of grain-grading, public elevators, and crop insurance. They were no longer content to be exploited by private business organizations doing badly what the state could do well.⁹

After the World War, the influence of the farmers made itself felt in the formation of a Farm Bloc in the United States Congress under the leadership of Senator Kenyon, of Iowa, and Senator Capper, of Kansas. This was a powerful and aggressive combination that exerted great influence on the passage of legislation. To the westerners, it was a movement helping to bring about prosperity, whereas Secretary of War Weeks, an eastern banker by profession, voiced the feeling of his section of the country when he declared that it "has had a tendency to weaken effective government, has resulted in irresponsible legislation. . . ." To one of the conservative New York newspapers, the work of the Farm Bloc was "political brigandage pure and simple."¹⁰

In 1926, "mutterings of discontent and political revolt" were coming in volume from the West, particularly from the corn belt. The farmers, dissatisfied with low prices, were militantly demanding relief from the government. Washington newspaper correspondents agreed that their insurrection was "virtually the only storm-cloud on President Coolidge's political horizon."¹¹ In 1928, the Republican national convention paid scant attention to their wishes. In 1929, the great depression

⁹ Vernon Louis Parrington, *The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America*, 286, 287. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

¹⁰ *The Literary Digest*, Vol. LXXI, December 24, 1921, 10.

¹¹ *The Literary Digest*, Vol. LXXXVIII, January 16, 1926, 5.

broke. By 1932, grim-faced farmers were dangling nooses and waving pitchforks suggestively before agents sent by mortgage holders to foreclose the mortgages on their farms. In the election of that year, they enthusiastically turned their backs on the Republican party and voted overwhelmingly for a new deal.

The people of the West, chiefly concerned as they are with agrarian interest, are not fundamentally radical in their political philosophy. There are very few communists among them. They believe in the gospel of hard work. Economic conditions have forced them increasingly into co-operative movements and led them to demand aid from the government, but they remain essentially individualists, individualists who have become politically sophisticated. One observer of popular reaction in the corn belt to government regulation, presenting his findings through portrayal of the feeling of a typical farmer, wrote in 1938:

Neither Jerry nor any of his non-cooperating friends feels that he is being oppressed by the government or dictated to by the Secretary of Agriculture. . . .

"I think you town folks do more worrying about the farmer's independence than we do," grins Jerry. . . . "Fact of the matter is, nobody has told me what I can do and what I can't. I can plow up my whole farm and plant it to corn if I want to and there's nothing in the law to stop me.

"I suppose there are some farmers who are worrying over losing their liberty, but I don't happen to know them. . . . What we're thinking about is what we are going to make out of our farms and how we are going to do it."¹²

Governor Philip La Follette reflected the mind of the West in his speech proclaiming the birth of the National Progressive Party: "The heart of American democracy is that men and

¹² Roland M. Jones, "An Inquiry into the Mind of the Farmer," *New York Times Magazine*, July 17, 1938, 19.

women who live under the laws and policies of a government have the ultimate right to decide what those laws and those policies shall be. . . . What so many people fail to see is that American freedom is inescapably interwoven with and a part of our high standard of living. . . . A farmer may be industrious, thrifty and intelligent, but that farmer is helpless against an economic storm sweeping across the nation. . . . We cannot answer these questions as lone individuals. They can be solved only by acting together as an organized people. . . . The earners appreciate that nothing is so important as the right and the duty of able-bodied men and women to produce—not just in the factory or just on the farm, but in every part of our system . . . in every place where men and women are performing the services and doing the tasks that give us a rich and fruitful life. . . . Every American has a deep religious faith in the principle that ‘all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights’. . . . We cannot make ourselves rich by working less and producing less. . . . Whatever it may cost . . . we shall use the power of the United States to restore to every American the opportunity to help himself.”¹³

The South is the most self-conscious, the most criticized, and the most sensitive section in the Union. Books about the region have been written in great numbers. The University of North Carolina Press catalogue for 1937-8 alone listed some eighteen books about the South. Magazine articles flow forth in an equally prolific stream. Some of them diagnose the South's ills, some probe its wounds in scientific spirit, some attempt to hide them under a covering of talcum powder, some cauterize them, and some simply rub salt into them. Since the Civil War, the South has suffered from an inferiority complex that makes the average citizen of the region bitterly resent any

¹³ *New York Times*, April 29, 1938.

kind of criticism, particularly if it comes from the North, but the number of alert and scholarly southerners who are interested in discovering and airing the truth in order that progress may be made is definitely on the increase.

One of the chief woes of the region is its poverty. A southern scholar has written that "The statistical indices of wealth, education, cultural achievement, health, law and order reduced to a per capita basis combine in every instance to give the southern states the lowest rankings in the Union."¹⁴ The lack of wealth is an important contributing factor to the other low ratings. The Report on the South made to the President by the National Emergency Council in 1938 called attention to the following facts. The South is a land rich in natural resources, but the people of the region have derived relatively little benefit from these resources because they have had neither the money nor the credit to develop them. "The richest state in the South ranks lower in per capita income than the poorest State outside the region. In 1937 the average income in the South was \$314; in the rest of the country it was \$604, or nearly twice as much." Many thousands of farm tenants "are living in poverty comparable to that of the poorest peasants in Europe." Sickness and death rates are unusually high among these low-income families. Child labor is more common in the South than in any other region. Low wages and poverty have tended to perpetuate themselves. "Labor organization has made slow and difficult progress among the low-paid workers, and they have had little collective bargaining power or organized influence on social legislation."¹⁵

Closely connected with the poverty of the South is its low

¹⁴ Rupert B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South*, 442. The University of North Carolina Press.

¹⁵ *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, printed by U. S. Government Printing Office.

rating in educational and related fields. "Illiteracy was higher in 1930 in the Southern States than in any other region, totaling 8.8 percent. The North Central States had a percentage of 1.9. New England and the Middle Atlantic States combined had a percentage of 3.5."¹⁶ Public libraries rank far below national standards. "The average per capita expenditure for public library service in the United States is about thirty-three cents. In the southern states the per capita expenditure ranges from two cents in the state that does least to eighteen cents in the state that does most for public libraries."¹⁷ The elementary schools of the area are the most poorly provided for of any section in the Union.

Higher education has also lagged far behind. "The total endowments of the colleges and universities of the South are less than the combined endowments of Yale and Harvard."¹⁸ The libraries of the University of California and the University of Illinois contain over a hundred thousand more volumes than the libraries of all the southern state universities combined.¹⁹ In 1935, Edwin R. Embree wrote an article discussing the relative rank of the leading universities in the United States. He listed eleven universities as outstanding in scholarly eminence. In discussing their geographical location, he called attention to the fact that not one of them was located in the South and that no southern university could come anywhere near having a claim to being a runner-up.²⁰

The low status of education in the South does not spring from any desire of its people to occupy their unenviable posi-

¹⁶ *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, 27, printed by U. S. Government Printing Office.

¹⁷ *Culture in the South*, ed. by W. T. Couch, 215. The University of North Carolina Press.

¹⁸ *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, 27.

¹⁹ *Culture in the South*, ed. by W. T. Couch, 216.

²⁰ Edwin R. Embree, "In Order of Their Eminence," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLV (1935), 652-64.

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tion. The percentage of total state income spent by the southern states on public schools averages well above that of the nation as a whole. The state universities of a number of states in the region have made encouraging strides forward in recent years, and they are accorded popular support that compares favorably with that given state universities in other sections of the country.

The existence of a large Negro population in the South, the economic and social position that it occupies, and the problems arising out of race relations are factors that have done much to give the South its sectional characteristics and keep alive the spirit of sectionalism. The attitude of southern whites toward Negroes is descended from the slavery system and the Reconstruction days. It is revealed both in a settled determination to keep them in a subordinate position and in the feeling revealed by such remarks as, "They're just like children. You have to be firm with them. . . . There never was one born that wouldn't steal." Except when they come into conflict with "poor whites," Negroes are ordinarily treated with something of the easy tolerance accorded children, as long as they "keep their place."

Southern white people are strongly opposed to any approach to social relationships between the two races on a plane of equality. This is illustrated by the feeling aroused when a University of North Carolina professor ate dinner at a Negro hotel with James W. Ford, Negro candidate for Vice-President, in 1936. *The News and Observer*, of Raleigh, North Carolina, a relatively liberal newspaper, said editorially, "And in the South men believe, quite apart from prejudice, that the public welfare will be best served by preserving racial integrity and that the best way to preserve racial integrity is to keep the races wholly apart in their social relationships." After pointing out that the consequences of the professor's act affected the Uni-

versity as well as himself, the editorial concluded, "Neither a university nor any other organization is bound to clasp to its bosom one who is careless of its welfare. The University has plenty of room within its broad tolerance for men who are Socialists but no room for men who have no social sense of their participation in the welfare of a great institution."²¹

Although Negroes theoretically are entitled to the equal protection of the laws, actually they are often discriminated against. The Scottsboro case has received widespread national attention as an example of the conviction of Negroes on questionable evidence. Perhaps more typical of common practice are events such as one related in the newspaper of a southern city of some twenty thousand population, which told that a nineteen-year-old Negro named Woodrow Wilson had been given sentences totaling one hundred years in prison for robbing a "filling station operator of \$38 and threatening his life with a pistol, carrying the weapon concealed after the robbery and stealing the pistol." Another item reported that two prisoners "a white man and a negro charged with being drunk" were brought before the judge of the police court. The white man was fined ten dollars and costs, and the Negro was fined fifty dollars and costs.

More serious in its consequences is the discrimination against Negroes in education. In 1930, the United States as a whole spent an average of \$99.00 annually for each pupil enrolled in school. The South spent \$44.31 per white pupil and \$12.57 per Negro pupil. In certain states, the discrepancy was still greater. For instance, Georgia spent an average of \$35.42 for each white pupil and \$6.38 for each Negro, and Mississippi spent \$45.34 for each white pupil and \$5.45 for each Negro. The salaries paid Negro teachers in the South averaged less than half of those paid white teachers. The value of school plant and

²¹ *News and Observer*, October 30, 1936.

equipment for each white pupil was \$157.00; for each Negro pupil it was \$37.00.²² Some prejudiced persons assert that education would make the Negro more dangerous, but those who are informed know that this is not true. Crimes of violence, particularly, are committed by ignorant savages. A Birmingham judge is quoted as saying, "No Negro has ever been brought into my court who had passed the sixth grade in school."²³

The feeling of Southern whites on the race question and their discriminations against Negroes do not spring from characteristics peculiar to southerners. There is a similar reaction whenever white people come into contact with any considerable number of people of another race, whether it be in China, the Philippines, California, or Chicago. The whites try to maintain a position of superiority. Race discrimination is not confined to the South. Even in the liberal and humane state of Wisconsin, the Negro cast of "Green Pastures," including a number of small children, were unable to find any place in Madison where they could obtain rooms and were forced to spend the night in a railroad station.²⁴ The difference between the northern and southern attitude on the Negro question is largely a result of the difference in the number of Negroes to be found in the two sections. The chief criticism of the attitude common to southern whites is not so much to be directed at their treatment of the generally ignorant and careless Negro laborers with whom they are daily associated as at their failure to make a greater effort to provide the facilities through which the Negroes can improve themselves intellectually and economically.

²² *School Money in Black and White*, a booklet published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund.

²³ Edwin R. Embree, *Education for All the People*, reprinted from *The American Scholar* of May, 1936, 12.

²⁴ *Time*, March 4, 1935, 35.

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One of the most significant economic institutions in the South is that of sharecropping. More than half of the farmers in this area are tenants. The southern tenant system originated in conditions that existed at the close of the Civil War, when land-owners left without capital or labor made use of the hundreds of thousands of former slaves and impoverished whites who were willing to work the land for a share of the harvest. In recent years, the system has been aggravated by the steady growth of the mortgage debt of farm owners. Many small owners have been forced to give up their land. Ownership has tended to concentrate in the hands of large landowners. The sharecropping system furnishes them a sure source of income through the growth of the cash crop of cotton, but the tenants, as well as the land, are exploited and impoverished in the process.

The sharecroppers raise large families of children, receive an income of from one hundred to two hundred dollars a year per family, and live on cornbread, molasses, and fatback. A considerable number of them are victims of hookworm, malaria, and pellagra, and are therefore economically inefficient. The sharecropping system is not conducive to crop diversification; hence, year after year they raise cotton on land badly in need of a change, and year after year they fall farther and farther behind. More than a third of the tenant families move every year. The frequent moves interfere with the schooling of the children and make it almost impossible for the family to take an active part in community affairs.

The sharecropping system is so entwined with the whole economic organization of the South that it raises problems very difficult of solution. However, efforts are being made to improve conditions. County agricultural agents are preaching the doctrine of crop diversification and rotation. Enlightened and progressive leaders among the farm owners are discussing

their own problems and trying to arrive at solutions. The movement for unionization of tenants has made some headway in recent years, particularly in the states of Arkansas and Alabama. This movement has been opposed with violence by the land owners, who are aware that conditions will be revolutionized if the tenants are able to unite in a strong organization. Politically, the tenant farmers and small land owners have been given little consideration in the past, except when demagogues came around at election time to win their votes with glowing promises never meant to be fulfilled. Politicians help only those who help themselves. The number of tenant farmers gives them a potential strength, hitherto unrealized, which, under intelligent leadership and organization would make their voice powerful in the solution of the problems that affect them.

The South has been controlled throughout most of its history by a small class composed of landowners and associated groups. They are sometimes referred to by critics as the "Bourbons." The great industrial interests that have made themselves increasingly important in the South are in alliance with this class. Devices such as the poll tax, especially the cumulative poll tax, discourage poor white people as well as Negroes from voting. For this, and other reasons, the percentage of people who vote is exceedingly small. This makes control by the dominant group more easy to maintain.

A study of a typical community in the deep South by Professors Paul W. Terry and Verner M. Sims²⁵ revealed that 68 per cent of the landowners in the county were qualified to vote, 58 per cent of the related tenants were qualified (by related tenants is meant those who are related to the landowners not more distantly than as first cousins), and 27 per cent of the unrelated white tenants were qualified to vote. The practical effect of landowner control in the community was shown in the

²⁵ Unpublished material.

distribution of CWA money. The large landowners received an average of twelve dollars per householder in a year. The small landowners averaged nine dollars, although their incomes were much less than the large landowners'. White tenants related to landowners received an average of thirty-five dollars, whereas unrelated white tenants received twenty-seven dollars. The average for Negro sharecroppers was eighty-eight cents in the year.

The common people are not by any means wholly disregarded. In many of the states of the deep South, certain politicians have made a particular effort to win their support. Because of the poor educational background of the members of this class of the population, and the lack of cultural advantages resulting from their poverty, politicians have found them most susceptible to demagogic appeals. The result is that the voters are not infrequently given a choice between demagogues and "Bourbons," and no other.

The composition of the electorate creates a difficult dilemma for a candidate or officeholder who aspires to a different classification, as illustrated by the experience of former Senator Black, of Alabama. In the days of the Ku Klux Klan, he, along with the state's other senator and the governor, were bitterly denounced by anti-Klan newspapers because they did not condemn Klan atrocities. Whatever may be said of the others, Senator Black was an able and sincere friend of the common people, but if he had alienated them by crusading against the Klan, a powerful lower middle class movement, he would have been forced to retire from politics, because the "Bourbons" and the industrialists were his bitter enemies.

The South is, as everybody knows, overwhelmingly Democratic in politics. A few years ago a college professor's daughter in Superior, Wisconsin, thinking of a girl who had come from the upper South, the only Democrat in her social set, said

dubiously to her father, "Daddy, Democrats just can't be quite as nice as Republicans can they?" The father, with the wisdom of maturity, replied, "Well, honey, in the North the nice people are Republicans, but in the South the nice people are Democrats." As a matter of fact, in the deep South the masses of the people follow "the nice people" in being almost wholly in the Democratic party.

The "solid South" does not spring from a particular allegiance in that area to the principles of Thomas Jefferson or from any other solidarity of political ideals. It is a product of the Civil War and Reconstruction period. One of the South's leading journalists expressed a common feeling when he was asked in a discussion group if the South would not be better off under a two-party system, and he replied that he would not mind having such a system in the South if the other party could just be called something other than "Republican." Of the Republican party he said, "Abraham Lincoln gave it its reputation but Thad Stevens gave it its character." Old Thad Stevens has been dead these many years, but the shadow of his influence still lies across the South.

Southern allegiance to the Democratic party is in reality so deeply rooted in tradition that it is a positive feeling and not simply the reflex of hostility to the Republican label. It could not be destroyed simply by calling the Republicans "Jeffersonians" or some other camouflaging name. Moreover, the southerners mistrust the leaders of the Northeast who have dominated the Republican party and written tariff laws and established discriminatory freight laws that have worked to their disadvantage. They have mistrusted the western Republicans for their radicalism. They have mistrusted all Republicans for their attitude on the Negro question. In recent years the progressive leadership of the Democratic party, along with its growing strength in the North and resultant cultivation of

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northern Negro votes, has led to increasing dissatisfaction in the ranks of the South's governing class. But they will remain Democrats however much they may chafe at leadership and policies that are abhorrent to them, unless the force operating to shake them loose becomes cataclysmic in nature.

The people of the South are fundamentally conservative in outlook. "Southern hospitality has never extended to ideas," a distinguished southerner has said. The reasons for this conservatism are several, as Josephine Pinckney has pointed out in her chapter on "Bulwarks Against Change," in *Culture in the South*.²⁶ One important influence has been that of the church. The relation here has been a double one. The church has been a powerful conservative force, and the people have clung to their religion because they were conservative. Another contributory factor has been the natural conservatism of a landed people who stay in one place. Although economic pressure is forcing the people increasingly to give up the ownership of their farms, the state of mind has persisted. The more energetic and progressive elements of the population have been steadily drained off, first to the West, and in more recent years to the North, where opportunities for success were greater. The presence of the Negro has contributed to the maintenance of the landowning and conservative state of mind in those who stayed at home. Negroes have provided a source of cheap labor that made it possible for a larger proportion of housewives to have servants than in other sections of the country. The presence of a large class considered inferior naturally tends to make conservatives out of those who are in a position of dominance and want to remain there.

Southern opinion is conservative also because it is dominated more completely than in any other section by a ruling class.

²⁶ *Culture in the South*, ed. by W. T. Couch, Chapter 3. The University of North Carolina Press.

The poor people not only have less to say about public affairs, but they are not so united as the laborers of the North, nor so well informed as the common people of any other section. They have less education, read fewer newspapers and magazines, and have fewer radios. Their opinions do not count as much and they are not so well qualified to form opinions or to express them as the masses of the people in other parts of the country.

The picture of southern conservatism can be overdrawn, of course. Hugo Black came out of Alabama to take his place with Norris and La Follette as an outstanding liberal in the field of national politics. In intellectual circles, H. C. Nixon, himself one of the South's ablest and most fearless scholars, has written, "Southern professors have not exercised the daring boldness of constructive and destructive criticism which has been manifest in a few of the outstanding universities of the country, and southern institutions have tended to assume an apologetic or defensive attitude rather than an aggressive or progressive policy in the face of controversy."²⁷ But the University of North Carolina, at least, has exerted a continuous influence of enlightened scholarship that has been an important factor in the life of the South, and its press has turned out a series of books on the South written in the best traditions of critical liberalism. A number of southern journalists also have been liberal in outlook and influence. Some of the leading newspapers of the region have favored federal anti-lynching legislation. In the heyday of the Ku Klux Klan, the *Montgomery Advertiser* condemned its activities so effectively that its editor won a Pulitzer prize.

The afflictions of the South are numerous, as writers have frequently enough pointed out. Southerners themselves have

²⁷ *Culture in the South*, ed. by W. T. Couch, 239. The University of North Carolina Press.

a tendency to blame them on the Civil War or on outside forces. In some cases, they deny that anything is wrong, or counter by pointing to evil conditions in other regions. Typical of this: about a week after President Roosevelt referred to the South as "the nation's number one economic problem," *The Birmingham News* started a series of six articles on conditions in the "deep North."²⁸ The author concluded with the explanation that he had "deliberately painted a dark picture of the North" because he wanted "to prove that you can go anywhere and find dirt if you are looking for it."

Actually, the South's troubles did not begin with the Civil War, as Jonathan Daniels forcefully brings out in *A Southerner Discovers the South*.²⁹ The tariff, impoverishment of the soil with cotton raising, contempt for labor, hookworm, malaria, and pellagra all existed before the war, Mr. Daniels reminds us. We may agree with him that "All of the major faults and flaws in Southern economy were on the way to full growth before the war began." Many years ago Thomas Jefferson wrote:

There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. . . . The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. With the morals of the people, their industry also is destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labor for himself who can make another labor for him. . . . And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? ³⁰

²⁸ The articles were published between July 13, 1938, and July 25, 1938.

²⁹ Jonathan Daniels, *A Southerner Discovers the South*, 335-7. Quotation by permission of the Macmillan Co., publishers.

³⁰ "Notes on Virginia," *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Memorial Edition, Vol. II, 226-7.

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The South was the victim before the Civil War, as it has been since, of a system based on the exploitation of both labor and land. Already, before the war the section was increasingly falling into economic bondage to the capitalists of the North-east. Since the war, the exploitation and the economic dependence have continued and the whole life and attitude of the South have been colored by these forces.

A discussion of regional factors in public opinion should not conclude without calling attention to the fact that regional factors can be discussed only in a general way, just as regional divisions must be made somewhat arbitrarily, for the regions shade off into each other and individuals are exceptions to the general trend. What is typical of one section of the country may not be typical of all of the states in it. However, certain characteristics are clearly discernible as being noticeably sectional. The most important of these we have tried to point out.

Of the sections in general, it may be said that interest in politics and participation in politics varies considerably from state to state and from section to section. The accompanying table illustrates this by showing the variation in the percentage of people voting in the different states in the Presidential election of 1932.³¹

³¹ The population figures were taken from the census reports for 1930, the election returns from *The World Almanac* for 1937, except that in the case of Texas the election returns were taken from Edgar Eugene Robinson, *The Presidential Vote 1896-1932*, 330.

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION TWENTY-ONE YEARS OLD OR OVER VOTING FOR
PRESIDENT IN 1932

NORTHEAST		Delaware.....	75.8
Maine.....	61.3	Pennsylvania.....	50.5
New Hampshire.....	69.8	Maryland.....	52.2
Vermont.....	62.1	West Virginia.....	82.5
Massachusetts.....	58.8		
Rhode Island.....	63.1	MIDDLE WEST	
Connecticut.....	58.1	Ohio.....	63.1
New York.....	57.5	Michigan.....	56.6
New Jersey.....	64.8		

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Although sectional influences have been highly important in the formation of political parties and public opinion, political parties have attempted to appeal to all regions and have generally softened sectional differences. And so great is the independence of the American mind that no section of the country, save the deep South, is completely under the control of one party. The sections differ from one another in racial composition, economic power, intellectual resources, and in general outlook, but individuals from all sections work together in the same political parties. Individuals from all sections belong to Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, read the same magazines, listen to the same radio programs, belong to the same business organizations, and trade at stores of the same chains. Sectional differences doubtless will always exist and have significance for students of public opinion, politicians, and salesmen, but they do not by any means exert an unchecked pull toward regional autonomy of opinion.

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION TWENTY-ONE YEARS OLD OR OVER VOTING FOR
PRESIDENT IN 1932 (*Cont.*)

Indiana.....	78.6	California.....	58.6
Illinois.....	70.3	Nevada.....	68.1
Missouri.....	70.9	Oklahoma.....	54.7
Iowa.....	68.8	Texas.....	26.5
Wisconsin.....	63.0	New Mexico.....	69.8
Minnesota.....	65.2	Arizona.....	48.4
West		South	
North Dakota.....	71.5	Virginia.....	16.3
South Dakota.....	74.5	North Carolina.....	46.1
Nebraska.....	70.1	South Carolina.....	12.7
Kansas.....	70.1	Georgia.....	17.0
Colorado.....	73.4	Florida.....	31.8
Wyoming.....	72.9	Alabama.....	18.1
Montana.....	67.9	Mississippi.....	14.1
Idaho.....	75.5	Louisiana.....	23.6
Utah.....	78.1	Tennessee.....	27.5
Washington.....	60.8	Arkansas.....	22.7
Oregon.....	59.3	Kentucky.....	69.1

XX

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE SUPREME COURT

NOW and then the Supreme Court comes to life in the news in a big way, despite the somber atmosphere of dignified aloofness in which its members habitually move. At such times, the Court becomes the subject of worshipful adoration from its most ardent defenders and of sulphurous condemnation from its equally enthusiastic critics. "Nine Honest Men" to its friends, "Nine Old Men" to the cynical, and "Nine gray-bearded vestal virgins who guard the altar of private property" in the temple of privilege to the gentlemen of the Left,¹ the members of the Supreme Court must be keenly aware that they are at least neither insignificant nor unnoticed. And the Supreme Court, perhaps the most powerful branch of American government, although it is the branch least responsive to public opinion, is not by any means completely immune from that sovereign force.

The makers of the Constitution devised a system of checks and balances designed to prevent the assumption of too much power by any one branch of the government. They paid particular attention to the checks on the President and on Congress. Apparently they had no fear that the Supreme Court would become tyrannical, perhaps because it controls neither the Army nor the public purse. Its power depends upon the acquiescence of the other two branches of government and the support of

¹ The quoted expression is from Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?* 45. Workers Library Publishers.

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public opinion. In the last analysis, the support of public opinion is the determining factor.

The power of the Court has grown to great proportions since its beginning. It has not been backward about taking power, and public opinion has, in the main, approved the system that has developed as a result. The Court's popular support rests upon two bases, one economic, the other psychological. To a certain extent the psychological backing is a result of economic interests, but not wholly.

The economic interests of the Supreme Court and its promoters are closely connected with the economic significance of the Constitution. It will be remembered that the Constitution was written by representatives of the propertied classes who had suffered from the economic dislocations of the Confederation period, and who expected to profit measurably by the development of a strong government. Not a single wage earner or frontiersman was in the Constitutional Convention. And the Constitution was ratified as a result of the support of the men of property. Under Chief Justice Marshall's leadership, the Supreme Court became the instrumentality for the effective interpretation of the Constitution in a way that would give vitality to the national government and protect the interests of private property. Back of all John Marshall's great nationalizing decisions that curbed the power of the states and strengthened the central government, most of which were in matters of business and finance, lies the basic conviction that state control and a weak central government had once been tried and the result had been economic chaos. Since the earliest days of its power, the Court has been exalted by the propertied classes, as the Constitution has been exalted by them, because the Constitution and the Court protect their interests. In every period of economic and social change, the Constitution comes to life and "becomes vigorous as a defender of old institutions and

practices.”² The voice that speaks from the Constitution is the voice of the Supreme Court. But the backing of the Court does not come from a small class. The power of the Court is a testimony to the conservatism of the American middle class.

The exalted position that the Supreme Court occupies can be understood only when the psychological basis of its power is examined. Perhaps the chief factor involved is the desire that men have for certainty and order and safety in a world where mistakes are common and human reason not always to be trusted. Instinctively, men seek a symbol of divine right. In the minds of a great many Americans, the Constitution has come to stand for the ultimate in political wisdom, and the Court is its guardian. Constitution and Court “are symbols of an ancient sureness and a comforting stability.”³ They stand for the whole Anglo-Saxon tradition of a government of laws and not of men. When we think of the rights and liberties that we prize most highly, we feel safer because the Supreme Court is there.

Max Lerner has suggested that there are three principal elements in the popular American pattern of divine rights; “the fetishism of the Constitution . . . the claim of the Court to the exclusive guardianship of the Constitution . . . the tradition of judicial neutrality.”⁴

Although the makers of the Constitution were all far from satisfied with it and critically aware of its faults, it was no sooner adopted than the cult of Constitution worship began to develop. In 1791, we find a judge of the Pennsylvania court of common pleas saying in his charge to the grand jury, “The laws and Constitution of our government ought to be regarded

² Thomas H. Reed, “The Supreme Court: Arbiter and Target,” *The Annals*, Vol. CLXXXV (1936), 35.

³ Max Lerner, “Constitution and Court as Symbols,” *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. XLVI (1937), 1290.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1307.

with reverence. Man must have an idol. And our political idol ought to be our Constitution and laws. They, like the ark of the covenant among the Jews, ought to be sacred from all profane touch.”⁵ The most enthusiastic promoters of Constitution worship were in many instances either men whose property interests were much better off under the Constitution than they had been in the hectic days of the Articles of Confederation, or politicians seeking their own advancement. In 1811, Senator W. H. Crawford was led to make the acid remark, “It has become so extremely fashionable to eulogize the Constitution, whether the object of the eulogy is the extension or contraction of the powers of the government, that whenever its eulogium is pronounced, I feel an involuntary apprehension of mischief.”⁶

In spite of the occasional manifestation of such cynicism, the promotion of Constitution worship has continued. In his second reply to Hayne, in 1830, Daniel Webster declared in ringing tones, “The people have preserved this, their own chosen Constitution, for forty years, and have seen their happiness, prosperity, and renown grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. . . . Overthrown by direct assault, it cannot be; evaded, undermined, NULLIFIED, it will not be, if we, and those who shall succeed us here, as agents and representatives of the people, shall conscientiously and vigilantly discharge the two great branches of our public trust, faithfully to preserve, and wisely to administer it.” More recently, the author of a letter to *The New York Times* wrote, “For so long as the Constitution of the United States endures in its present form, it must operate with the infallibility of the laws of nature. Sound and fecund growths will be fortified by its influences. Its impact

⁵ Quoted in Frank I. Schechter, “The Early History of the Tradition of the Constitution,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. IX (1915), 733.

⁶ Quoted in Edward S. Corwin, “The Constitution As Instrument and As Symbol,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. XXX (1936), 1077.

will always strip the fruit from any governmental tree which is too defective to maintain its own integrity."⁷

The Supreme Court very early assumed the function of guarding the Constitution. Although John Marshall was particularly interested in strengthening the power of the national government in order to provide favorable conditions for the conduct of business and the protection of property rights, he continually emphasized the role of the Court as guardian of the Constitution. In his famous decision in the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, in which he first advanced the doctrine of the Court's power to hold acts of Congress unconstitutional, he did not claim the power to veto legislation. His contention was that the business of the judiciary is to say what the law is, and since the judges have sworn to uphold the Constitution, they must declare acts of Congress invalid when they conflict with the Constitution. Succeeding justices have followed John Marshall in the assumption that the Court is the Constitution's authoritative interpreter and its last line of defense. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney said in 1858, "The judicial power was justly regarded as indispensable, not merely to maintain the supremacy of the laws of the United States, but also to guard the States from any encroachment upon their reserved rights by the general government." Since the Constitution was the supreme law of the land, he concluded, as Marshall had done, that the Court's duty was to hold incompatible congressional legislation unconstitutional.⁸

If the Court is to be a satisfactory guardian of a supreme law, the judges must be full of wisdom and they must be objective in their attitudes.⁹ Accordingly, the Court has spoken as though it were wholly neutral and objective in every conflict.

⁷ *New York Times*, May 5, 1936.

⁸ *Ableman v. Booth*, 21 Howard, 520.

⁹ See Max Lerner, "Constitution and Court as Symbols," *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. XLVI (1937), 1310-11.

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Its defenders have encouraged the growth of a tradition that the judges are immune from economic and class interests and the other forces that make ordinary men fallible and biased. This tradition has taken root partly because of the fact that the Court has, on the whole, functioned in a manner that has commanded respect, and has been at least as satisfactory as the other two branches of the Federal Government. A further reason for the growth of the tradition has been the instinctive desire of the people for certainty and a final reliable standard of justice.

The judges not infrequently proclaim their own objectivity and even imply their infallibility. Thus, we find Mr. Justice Roberts in a 1936 decision denying that the Court has assumed a power to overrule the action of the people's representatives. What the Court does when a statute is challenged, he says, "is to lay the article of the Constitution which is invoked beside the statute which is challenged and to decide whether the latter squares with the former."

All the court does, or can do, is to announce its considered judgment upon the question. The only power it has, if such it may be called, is the power of judgment. This court neither approves nor condemns any legislative policy. . . .

The question is not what power the federal Government ought to have but what powers in fact have been given by the people.¹⁰

The friends of the Court sometimes go even farther than the justices themselves in proclaiming the objectivity and infallibility of the Court. A prominent journalist has written in a recent laudatory book on the Supreme Court that although the legislator is concerned with the shifting tides of popular feeling rather than with permanent principles, the Supreme Court "is the guardian of sacred principles." The Supreme Court, he says, is made up of men resigned to lives of judicial piety, whose

¹⁰ *United States v. Butler et al. Receivers of Hoosac Mills Corp.*, 297 U. S. 62-3.

aim is not to advance the cause of any party or achieve for themselves the personal glory that may come to men in elective offices. "Theirs is only to preserve the immutable principles of American jurisprudence as it has come to them through centuries upon centuries of ethics and morality." To take away the power of these men to declare the supreme law of the land would be to "substitute the rule of passion for the rule of reason."¹¹

The myth of judicial neutrality has been widely accepted and has contributed much to the popular strength of the Court. That it is only a myth, however, is indicated by testimony that may be gained from the friends of the Court themselves. For instance, we find ex-President (and later Chief Justice) Taft arguing in favor of the election of Warren G. Harding in 1920 with the statement:

Four of our incumbent Justices are beyond the retiring age of 70, and the next President will probably be called upon to appoint their successors. There is no greater domestic issue in this election than the maintenance of the Supreme Court as the bulwark to enforce the guaranty that no man shall be deprived of his property without due process of law. Who can be better trusted to do this—Mr. Cox, the party successor of Mr. Wilson, or Mr. Harding, the standard bearer of the Republican Party?¹²

That the decisions of the Court are sometimes arrived at by very human processes is indicated by the testimony contained in a confidential letter written by Mr. Justice Miller in 1870. Of the fight within the Court over the question of reconsidering the constitutionality of the legal tender act, Mr. Justice Miller wrote that there was a desperate struggle in secret conference for three weeks, and he said, "The Chief Justice has resorted to all the stratagems of the lowest political trickery to prevent their

¹¹ David Lawrence, *Nine Honest Men*, 4, 16. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

¹² Quoted in an address by Hugo L. Black, printed in *Congressional Record*, March 25, 1937, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 3575.

being heard, and the fight has been bitter in the conference room. . . . The excitement has nearly used me up." ¹³

The fact that the Supreme Court reverses itself from time to time indicates further that the justices are not infallible and that their decisions do not come from any supernatural oracle of truth. Among the most notable precedent-breaking decisions was that of Chief Justice Taney, in the *Genesee Chief Case* in 1851.¹⁴ In that decision, the Court extended admiralty jurisdiction over inland navigable waters, and in so doing overruled two of its previous decisions and shattered a rule of law previously regarded as settled. This break with precedent was generally regarded as wise and commendable. A reversal less generally applauded came some years later in the *Legal Tender Cases*. In 1870, the Supreme Court, by a vote of four to three, declared the *Legal Tender Act* of 1862 unconstitutional. One year later, after the addition of two new justices, the Court reversed itself and by a five-to-four decision held the act constitutional. Another example of quick reversal is to be found in the recent minimum-wage law decisions of the Court. On June 1, 1936, a New York Minimum Wage Law for Women and Children was held unconstitutional, by a five-to-four decision, as violating the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.¹⁵ Ten months later, a similar statute of the state of Washington was upheld by a five-to-four decision.¹⁶ The reversal in this instance was not due to a change in the membership of the Court but to a switch of Mr. Justice Roberts from the conservative side to the liberal side.

Decisions in which the Court reverses itself do not necessarily indicate that there is anything wrong with the Court. In fact,

¹³ Quoted in Sidney Ratner, "Was the Supreme Court Packed by President Grant?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. L (1935), 357.

¹⁴ *Genesee Chief v. Fitzhugh*, 12 Howard, 443.

¹⁵ *Morehead v. New York*, 298 U. S. 587.

¹⁶ *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish*, 300 U. S. 379.

they sometimes indicate just the opposite. Certainly Taney's Genesee Chief decision was a wise modification of the law as it had developed in England under different circumstances and been accepted in the United States until the Court was faced with conditions that made its alteration desirable. The law should grow as the mind and social conscience of the people grow. It should be judiciously molded to fit the needs of changing economic conditions. Reversals of the Court have been cited in this connection merely to emphasize the fact that there is no absolute source of true constitutional interpretation that the justices can tap. The Constitution does not speak, as Chief Justice Taney once said it did, in "the same words" and with "the same meaning and intent with which it spoke when it came from the hands of its framers. . . ." ¹⁷ It speaks with the words of justices who are human and who arrive at human decisions.

In times of great economic, social, or political change and conflict, the Supreme Court is subjected to bitter criticism by the advocates of change because the Court guards the *status quo*. That this is noticeably true is illustrated by the attacks on the Court during the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democratic revolutions, in the Civil War period, in the period of the third democratic revolution at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, and in the period of New Deal legislation following the depression of 1929 and succeeding years.

The seeming ruthlessness of the Supreme Court in tossing the New Deal legislation of the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration into the discard enhanced its popularity with the conservatives and aroused the resentment of the progressives. For the most part, the New Dealers remained silent for a long time

¹⁷ *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 19 Howard, 426 (1856).

in the face of decisions destructive of their most valued measures. On a few occasions they spoke out. After the NRA decision in 1935, President Roosevelt accused the Court of interpreting the commerce clause of the Constitution in the light of the "horse and buggy days" of 1789. If the country was to accept the view that the government was helpless to deal with national social and economic problems, it was his opinion that it might as well abandon its program and revert to the status of 1789. Some time later, the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace, referred to an action of the Supreme Court as allowing "the greatest legalized steal in history." Such criticisms of the Court were pounced upon by the opponents of the New Deal and gibbeted as political sacrilege. But a backward glance at the expressed opinions of critics of the past reveals that it was not a brand of sacrilege peculiar to the New Dealers.

Thomas Jefferson, who is now venerated and claimed as a political father by almost everybody, had his troubles with the Court and was one of the most severe critics it has ever had. In the winter of 1820, he wrote to Thomas Ritchie, "The judiciary of the United States is the subtle corps of sappers and miners constantly working underground to undermine the foundations of our confederated fabric."¹⁸ A year later, he wrote to another friend about the matter of "curbing the Judiciary in their enterprises on the constitution." He was not in favor of the suggestion that the Senate be made an appellate court on constitutional questions. A better remedy for the abuses of the existing system, he thought, was to establish six-year terms for judges, with eligibility for re-appointment by the President with the approval of both houses of Congress. The judges would thus be made responsible to the representatives of the sovereign will. "If this would not be independence

¹⁸ December 25, 1820, *Writings* (Ford edition), Vol. X, 170.

enough, I know not what would be such, short of the total irresponsibility under which we are acting and sinning now. . . . Impeachment therefore is a bugbear which they fear not at all. But they would be under some awe of the canvas of their conduct which would be open to both houses regularly every 6th year. It is a misnomer to call a government republican, in which a branch of the supreme power is independent of the nation.”¹⁹

Jefferson's attitude toward the Supreme Court was largely a development of his experience with that body as it was dominated by John Marshall, a man whose political and economic creed was almost the direct antithesis of his own. The antipathy between Jefferson and Marshall was of long duration. When, as a result of the election of 1800, the House of Representatives was forced to choose between Jefferson and Aaron Burr for the Presidency, Alexander Hamilton had written to Marshall asking him to support Jefferson as the lesser of two evils. Marshall had replied that he thought Jefferson would “sap the fundamental principles of the government,” and concluded “. . . I can take no part in this business. I cannot bring myself to aid Mr. Jefferson.”²⁰ Time and again, in the years that followed, Jefferson was irritated by what seemed to him to be attacks on his Presidential power by the Chief Justice, while Marshall felt that Jefferson was leading an attack on the judiciary.

The leaders of the second democratic wave, which swept the country in the Jacksonian period, also found themselves out of harmony with the Marshall-dominated Court. On one occasion, President Jackson is reported to have said, “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it.” Whether

¹⁹ To James Pleasants, December 26, 1821, *Writings* (Ford edition), Vol. X, 198-9.

²⁰ John E. Oster, *Political and Economic Doctrines of John Marshall*, 91. Walter Neale.

or not he ever said anything like that, he did firmly declare in his Bank veto message in 1832 that it was the duty of the President to follow his own judgment as to the constitutionality of bills he signed or vetoed rather than the judgment of the Court. He said:

If the opinion of the Supreme Court covered the whole ground of this act, it ought not to control the coordinate authorities of this Government. The Congress, the Executive, and the Court must each for itself be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution. Each public officer who takes an oath to support the Constitution swears that he will support it as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others. It is as much the duty of the House of Representatives, of the Senate, and of the President to decide upon the constitutionality of any bill or resolution which may be presented to them for passage or approval as it is of the supreme judges when it may be brought before them for judicial decision. The opinion of the judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of Congress has over the judges, and on that point the President is independent of both. The authority of the Supreme Court must not, therefore, be permitted to control the Congress or the Executive when acting in their legislative capacities, but to have only such influence as the force of their reasoning may deserve.²¹

In 1860, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, who as a close political adviser of Jackson in 1832 had written most of the veto message for him, wrote to defend Jackson against the charge of having asserted that he was free to use his own judgment as to constitutionality in enforcing the laws.²² Taney explained that the doctrine set forth had been simply that the President and members of Congress in their capacity as law-makers must follow the dictates of their own considered judgment as to the constitutionality of measures that they support or oppose, re-

²¹ James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. II, 582. Published by authority of Congress.

²² B. C. Steiner, "Taney's Letters to Van Buren in 1860," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. X, 23-4.

gardless of the decisions of the Supreme Court on similar questions. Such a doctrine Chief Justice Taney was still willing to defend in 1860.

Martin Van Buren, another Jacksonian intimate and lieutenant, although agreeing in the main with the Taney view, was more inclined to curb the power of the Court than was Taney. He was afraid that Taney had been too much influenced by "the plastic hand of John Marshall." He suggested that the decision in the case of *Marbury v. Madison* was a Federalist attempt to apply an opening wedge for the enlargement of the judicial power of the national government with a view to strengthening the Federalist control over the government. The Court asserted its power to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional but, according to Van Buren, the efforts to secure Marbury's commission were dropped because the Court was aware that its appellate jurisdiction might be taken away by act of Congress, and would be if they persisted in the conflict with the Jeffersonians. Van Buren quoted with approval the words of Senator White, "If different interpretations are put upon the Constitution by the different departments, the people is the tribunal to settle the dispute." And he said, "The deeper the subject is looked into, the more apparent to all *bona fide* searchers for truth will become the fallacy of the principle which claims for the Supreme Court a controlling power over the other departments in respect to constitutional questions."²³

Abraham Lincoln, rising to prominence when Van Buren's star was descendent, must also be ranked among the strong critics of the Court. He made his first public condemnation following the Dred Scott decision, in which the Court upheld private property rights in slaves, at that time perfectly respect-

²³ Martin Van Buren, *Inquiry into the Origin and Course of Political Parties in the United States*, 281-335. Hurd and Houghton.

able property rights from a legal standpoint. He declared that the people were preparing themselves for "the chains of bondage" if they accepted this decision without objection, "if the elections shall promise that the next Dred Scott decision and all future decisions will be quietly acquiesced in by the people." In his first inaugural address, he took the position that the Court's decision of a particular case must be regarded as binding in that case, with the chance that it might be overruled if erroneous. Then he added:

At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by the decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.

Lincoln's voice was only one of the many that were raised in the storm of protest in the North that followed the Dred Scott decision dealing with the burning issue of slavery. The *New York Tribune* of March 7, 1857, said editorially, "The decision, we need hardly say, is entitled to just so much moral weight as would be the judgment of those congregated in any Washington bar-room." And a few days later, "It is the election of Mr. Buchanan which has emboldened our five slaveholding Judges to volunteer this extra-judicial proclamation of barbarism and inhumanity as the staple of the United States Constitution."²⁴

The legislature of Maine passed a resolution, "That the extra-judicial opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of Dred Scott, is not binding, in law or in conscience, upon the government or citizens of the United States, and that it is of an import so alarming and dangerous, as to demand the

²⁴ *New York Tribune*, March 13, 1857.

instant and emphatic reprobation of the country.”²⁵ The legislatures of Vermont, New York, and Ohio passed similar resolutions.

In the United States Senate, William H. Seward bitterly attacked the decision and accused the President and the justices of conspiring to fasten slavery on the Territories. He denied that the Court's decision had any validity, except as it applied to the immediate case. And he voiced the threat, “Let the court recede. Whether it recedes or not, we shall reorganize the court, and thus reform its political sentiments and practices, and bring them into harmony with the Constitution and with the laws of nature.”²⁶

After the Civil War had removed the question of slavery from national politics, the Republican party, by then become conservative and respectable, dominated the political scene for more than a quarter century with only minor flurries disturbing the placidity of the course of national development. As the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth, a wave of progressive and militant democracy hit the country with force enough to upset the even movement of events. In this period of turbulent democracy, both the more progressive states and the national government ran afoul of the Supreme Court when they passed social legislation to extend the protection of the government to the laboring classes, and in attempts to deal with other problems by new methods.

The enthusiastic conservatism of the Court was met with bitter criticism. And among the critics of the Supreme Court and of conservative state courts were few who spoke with more directness and effect than the characteristically blunt Theodore Roosevelt. In 1912, he wrote that the people may be aroused

²⁵ E. W. R. Ewing, *Legal and Historical Status of the Dred Scott Decision*, 195. Cobden Pub. Co.

²⁶ *Congressional Globe*, March 3, 1858, 943.

to sound and high thinking and their political representatives show a willingness to carry out the popular purpose and "the whole movement for good may come to naught, and festering wrong and injustice be perpetuated, because certain judges, certain courts, are steeped in some outworn political or social philosophy, and totally misapprehend their relations to the people and to the public needs." Although professing the highest respect and admiration for the judiciary, he contended that the attitude of the people toward them "should be one of appreciation and respect; *but not of servility*." He pointed out that the power of passing on the constitutionality of statutes exercised by American courts is a function peculiar to the courts of this country, and that it makes the judges in some respects more powerful lawgivers than either legislatures or executives. He was suspicious of any tendency to make judges the masters rather than the servants of the people. Referring to the Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Lochner v. New York* and several decisions of state courts, he declared that the judges had proved their devotion "not to the Constitution, but to a system of social and economic philosophy which, in my judgment, is not merely outworn, but to the last degree mischievous, because of its utter unsuitability to existing social and economic conditions."

He favored allowing the people of a state to overrule judicial decisions of state courts on questions of constitutionality by popular vote. Then he went on to say:

I hold most strongly that the people of New York State and of the United States have the power and the duty, acting in their collective capacity through the National and State Governments, to do whatever is necessary to guard the welfare, not only of women and children, but of men, where they are required to live or to labor under conditions that are destructive of decency and good citizenship. I hold that public servants are in very truth the servants and not the masters of the people, and that this is true not only of executive and

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legislative officers but of judicial officers as well. . . . As a matter of expediency it may be . . . desirable that the control of the people over the judge shall be exercised more cautiously and in different fashion than the control by the people over the legislator and the executive; but the control must be there, the power must exist in the people to see to it that the judge like the legislator and the executive, becomes in the long run representative of and answerable to the well-thought-out judgment of the people as a whole.²⁷

In the years following Theodore Roosevelt's criticism, the Supreme Court had a relatively peaceful career until the beginning of the Presidency of the second Roosevelt. The Roosevelt landslide of 1932 was largely a result of the popular feelings generated by the economic depression that began in 1929. The extent and the violence of the opinions reflected by that landslide represented more extreme feelings than American politics had felt since the settlement of the issue of slavery. The result was a program of New Deal legislation designed to deal with the economic and social problems that the depression had thrown into sharp relief, a program that departed from conventional standards of national government action, the constitutionality of which could be sustained only by a very liberal construction of the Constitution. Such a construction was not forthcoming. In spite of the political upheaval of 1932, the Supreme Court continued to reflect a conservative economic and constitutional viewpoint. The result was a string of decisions holding important statutes unconstitutional. Among the more important of such decisions were those holding unconstitutional the Railroad Retirement Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1935, the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the Guffey Coal Act in 1936. At a time when progressive sentiment was stronger than it had been for several generations, some of the Court's decisions

²⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, "Judges and Progress," *The Outlook*, Vol. C (1912), 40-8.

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seemed to indicate that the Court was more conservative than it had been for many years. The result was a growing popular dissatisfaction.

In some cases, dissenting justices indicated their lack of sympathy with the course followed by the majority in unusually strong dissenting opinions. One of the most powerful of such dissents was that of Mr. Justice Stone in the Agricultural Adjustment Act case in 1936. In the course of his opinion, he warned the Court that it should be concerned only with the power to enact statutes and not with their wisdom, and he said that "while unconstitutional exercise of power by the executive and legislative branches of the government is subject to judicial restraint, the only check upon our own exercise of power is our own sense of self-restraint." "Courts are not the only agency of government that must be assumed to have capacity to govern," he warned the majority.²⁸

About a month after Mr. Justice Stone had spoken thus frankly about judicial abuse of power, Senator George Norris reflected the critical attitude of the progressive political leaders when he expressed the opinion, in the Senate, that the Supreme Court had placed itself beyond the control of the people. "In fact," he said, "the Supreme Court now, in effect, for all practical purposes is a continuous constitutional convention. The people can change the Congress, but only God can change the Supreme Court."²⁹

In spite of a growing volume of adverse criticism of the Court from political leaders in sympathy with the New Deal program, no one knew just what was the attitude of the masses of the people. The tradition of the Court's sacredness made many political strategists wary and doubtful of the political expedience of rough treatment of the Court. There was no safe way

²⁸ *United States v. Butler et al. Receivers of Hoosac Mills Corp.*, 297 U. S. 78-9, 87.

²⁹ *Congressional Record*, February 12, 1936, 74th Congress, 2d Session, 1883.

of finding out definitely whether the Supreme Court was a god, or had become a devil, in the minds of a majority of the people. Consequently, proposals for curbing the power of the judiciary were not allowed to become an important issue in the Presidential campaign of 1936.

After his re-election by an almost unprecedented majority, President Roosevelt soon moved to deal with the problem of judicial obstruction of his program. Early in 1937, he proposed that the President be authorized to appoint an additional justice to the Supreme Court for each justice over seventy who did not retire, with fifteen as the maximum size of the Court, and that he be allowed to appoint an additional judge for every judge over seventy years of age in the lower federal courts who did not retire. He explained the purpose of his proposal to the people by saying:

That plan has two purposes: By bringing into the judicial system a steady and continuing stream of new and younger blood, I hope, first, to make the administration of all Federal justice speedier and therefore less costly; secondly, to bring to the decision of social and economic problems younger men who have had personal experience and contact with modern facts and circumstances under which average men have to live and work. This plan will save our National Constitution from hardening of the judicial arteries.³⁰

The desirability of the retirement of justices at seventy did not originate with President Roosevelt. Former President William H. Taft wrote in 1913 that he supposed Congress had not made retirement at seventy compulsory because they thought it doubtful that they had the power to do so. "I think the absence of power in Congress to do this is a defect." Admitting that some justices were able to perform their work very well after they had passed the seventy-year mark, he thought it

³⁰ Radio address, March 9, 1937, *Congressional Record*, March 10, 1937, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 2651.

better to lose the services of such exceptional men in order to avoid the presence on the Bench "of men who are not able to keep up with their work, or to perform it satisfactorily."³¹

President Roosevelt was clearly not thinking so much of physical disability as of mental attitudes when he proposed to duplicate each justice over seventy who refused to retire. His proposal was designed to change the attitude of the Court by changing its membership. This, said the opponents of the President, was a proposal to "pack" the Court and destroy its independence.

The fight over the proposal was unusually bitter. For the first time in many years, an issue was joined that seemed to make possible a definite test of public opinion on the powerful position of the Court.

Among the most caustic of the Court's critics was the Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes. He declared that four of the nine votes on the Court were loaded against the people. This meant that if there was a difference among the other five justices regarding the constitutionality of state or national efforts to meet new problems those efforts would be nullified. "Whether Democracy can be made to work depends on a single peripatetic vote," he said. As he described the situation, changing economic conditions meant nothing to the "well-insulated minds" of the four justices who were willing "to learn nothing and to forget nothing."³²

The opponents of the President's proposal were equally vigorous in their condemnation of it. The general counsel of the National Association of Manufacturers, in an address in New York City, said, "The difference between amending the Constitution and changing its meaning by the selection of judges disposed to write a new rule of decision is vital. . . . It is the

³¹ William Howard Taft, *Popular Government*, 159. Yale University Press.

³² Speech in Chicago, April 10, 1937, *New York Times*, April 11, 1937.

difference between maintaining the independence of the Judicial Department and destroying it.”³³ Senator Edward R. Burke, of Nebraska, said, “The President’s proposal is unsound, unwise and most dangerous.” To Senator John G. Townsend, Jr., of Delaware, it was a proposal “to make the Supreme Court subservient to the President,” and “fraught with far-reaching and serious possibilities.” Senator Wallace H. White, of Maine, declared that, “No greater danger to government by the people and to popular rights has ever appeared in our country.”³⁴

Congressmen were deluged with mail telling them what course to pursue. With few exceptions, the letters received were overwhelmingly against the President’s proposal. Although the absence of uniformly phrased letters indicated that this demonstration of opinion was spontaneous rather than managed, the quality of the stationery and the intellectual level of the letters were above the average and indicated that the letters came from people in the higher economic groups.³⁵ “As one Senator put it, most of the messages he received were either telegrams, which, he said, had to be ‘sent by people with money enough to pay for them, or letters written on embossed letterheads.’ He thought the reaction might be different if and when ‘we hear from the men between the corn rows and in the factories.’”³⁶

Other indications of popular feeling are to be found in various sources. Most of the large newspapers opposed the President’s plan. However, the alignment in this instance was similar to the alignment in the campaign of 1936, and indicated practically nothing about the opinion of the masses of the

³³ *New York Times*, February 21, 1937.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, February 10, 1937.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, February 21, 1937.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, February 9, 1937.

people. More significant was a poll conducted by *The Publishers' Auxiliary*, of daily and weekly newspapers outside the large metropolitan centers. It indicated that these papers were opposed to the plan in the ratio of three to one.³⁷ A political observer for *The New York Times* reported that in the typical middle western state of Nebraska, a large proportion of the press were hostile to the President's proposal, and the bar was strongly opposed to it. However, looking a bit deeper, into the letters from readers in the newspapers, into the mind of the man on the street as revealed from radio interviews and informal polls, much support for the President was discovered. Interestingly enough, this support seemed to be based on confidence in President Roosevelt rather than on convictions on the merits of the plan proposed.³⁸ A substantial number of state federations of labor and an imposing number of national labor unions supported the President's proposal.

On the other hand, Mr. Henry Ford, voicing his opposition to changes in the judiciary, was quoted by *The New York Times* of February 20, 1937, as saying, "The Supreme Court now is ideal. Changes over the years have seen to that."

Although the evidence is fragmentary and offers no authoritative indication of public opinion on the issues involved, the conclusion is almost inescapable that the middle class, as well as the wealthier classes, were predominantly hostile to the Roosevelt proposal. Certainly, the opponents of the plan were much more vocal than its advocates, and their hostility seemed much stronger than the support of its friends. Their victory and the lack of any strong reaction following it would seem to illustrate the truth of the principle that the strength with which convictions are held may be as important as numbers of people in determining effective public opinion.

³⁷ *Publishers' Auxiliary*, March 20, 1937.

³⁸ *New York Times*, March 7, 1937.

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One of the most significant revelations of the whole fight over the proposal to "pack" the Court was the lack of defenders for the policy of the Court in recent years. Some of the most effective opponents of the Roosevelt proposal declared that they would favor a Constitutional amendment curbing the Court's power. The principle of an independent judiciary was warmly defended, and the President's attempt to convert the Court by enlarging it was strenuously opposed, but the nine black-robed gentlemen and their policies were criticized by their friends as well as by their enemies. This fact probably is responsible for the change in the Court's attitude toward New Deal legislation, which was revealed immediately after the war of words that settled their fate.

The Supreme Court is a conservative institution, and it responds slowly to public opinion in normal times. Packing seems to be the simplest and quickest way to hasten the pace with which it follows the popular will. This is a device that has been used on various occasions when political currents were running strong. In 1801, just before they were to go out of power, the lame-duck Federalist Congress passed an act reducing the size of the Supreme Court from six to five and providing for the establishment of a large number of circuit judgeships. President Adams hastily filled the new positions with Federalists. Soon after the Republicans came into power, they repealed this bill, and were met by the solemn warning of the Federalists that they had destroyed the independence of the judiciary and struck a mortal blow at the Constitution. In 1807, the size of the Court was raised to seven. In 1837, two more justices were added, partially at least, for the purpose of strengthening the Jacksonian influence on the Court. One Democratic paper declared that this "renovation" of the Court's membership under Democratic auspices "may be regarded as the closing of an old and the opening of a new era in its

history.”³⁹ A congressional act of 1863 increased the size of the Court from nine to ten, without any very good reason other than the strengthening of Republican influence in its membership. An act of 1866 reduced the size of the Court to seven to prevent President Andrew Johnson from filling expected vacancies. In 1869, after Johnson’s term had expired, the membership was raised from seven to nine.

The act of 1869 apparently was not passed for the purpose of “packing” the Court, but it did enable President Grant to bring about a change in the Court’s attitude toward the Legal Tender Act. On February 7, 1870, the Supreme Court, by a vote of four to three, held the Legal Tender Act of 1862 unconstitutional. The Court’s decision would have required a drastic contraction of the currency and forced the administration to deal with some difficult problems in finance, and was received with considerable hostility. On the day the decision was announced, President Grant nominated two new justices to the Court. The presence of the two new justices led to the re-opening of the legal tender question, and in 1871 by a five to four decision the Court reversed itself. It is highly probable that the President knew in advance what the first decision would be. His Secretary of the Treasury was informed of it by the Chief Justice about two weeks before it was announced. But whether President Grant received this information or not, he did know that the men whom he was naming to the Court were in sympathy with his views on the legal tender question. When he was requested to deny a charge of packing the Court, he refused to make such a denial. He told his Secretary of State that it would be difficult for him to make such a statement because, although he had not required a pledge from the new appointees, he did know their views on the legal tender ques-

³⁹ Quoted in Charles Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History*, revised edition, Vol. II, 41, 42.

tion, and he did think it important that the constitutionality of the act be sustained.⁴⁰ In this change, a change in personnel quite clearly brought the Court into harmony with the other branches of the government in almost record time.

The Court's slowness in responding to public opinion causes the demand for "packing" in times of particularly strong feeling on economic and political questions. In such times, the gradual replacement of judges, which comes with the normal filling of vacancies resulting from death and resignation, does not seem to operate fast enough to satisfy the dominant majority. They then seek to obtain their ends by hastening the process artificially. But packing the Court is only a temporary expedient. It may change the majority at a particular time. It eases the situation for the particular period, but it works no permanent change in the position or power or practice of the Court.

As a matter of fact, the evidence seems to indicate that the people do not want any drastic change in the position of the Supreme Court. Some final authority is necessary in our political system, and the confidence of the people in the Court is so deeply ingrained that they are afraid to substitute any other branch of the government for it. The tradition of judicial wisdom and neutrality meets attacks that vary in quantity and in bitterness as economic and social questions become more or less acute, but it is never destroyed. And the power of the Court is not seriously affected. Like Old Man River, it "just keeps rollin' along."

One of the factors that contributes most to keep the Court's position as a symbol of certainty in the mind of the average man is the feeling that it will protect his cherished individual rights if they are threatened by unreasonable and arbitrary acts

⁴⁰ Sidney Ratner, "Was the Supreme Court Packed by President Grant?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. L (#935), 350, 351.

of a temporary majority. It is a house of refuge to which he can fly in time of crisis and in which he prefers to put his trust in such times rather than in legislative or executive officers. The history of the Court furnishes some justification for this feeling. In a number of great decisions affecting individual rights, it has spoken with the voice of reason in the midst of a storm of popular unreason. In the case of *ex parte Milligan*, civilian rights were defended against tyrannical military control. In the case of *United States v. Lee*, in 1882, the Court ordered restitution to the heirs of General Robert E. Lee for the seizure of his estate of Arlington during the Civil War. The *Meyer v. Nebraska* decision, in 1923, held unconstitutional a state law against the teaching of German passed in the hysterical days of the World War, and defined with a breadth that Americans generally approve, the rights of parents and teachers. The Scottsboro decisions gave a measure of protection to poor Negroes who were the victims of race discrimination. The *Dirk De Jonge* decision in 1937 forced again the recognition of the principle that freedom of speech is guaranteed even to despised minorities. Such decisions should not be forgotten, and are not forgotten by everyone, when the currents of criticism swirl around the heads of the "nine old men." They furnish atonement for many judicial sins.

In their attitude toward social and economic questions, the justices should maintain a broad and tolerant attitude toward the attempts of legislatures to deal with the problems of a rapidly developing civilization if they are to prove most useful to their country. This they sometimes find difficult, for they are people just like the rest of us. If Presidents paid more attention to the quality of the men appointed to the Court, we would probably find it more satisfactory in that regard. Years ago, William H. Taft declared, "Great judges and great courts distinguish between the fundamental and the casual. They

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make the law to grow not by changing it, but by adapting it, with an understanding of the progress in our civilization, to new social conditions.”⁴¹ If his statements are true, we would expect the second-rate members of the Court to be most obstructive and cause the most trouble. Certainly, some of the great “liberals” on the Court have been among the best trained and ablest of its members. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, one of the first great liberals on the Court in his attitude toward most social legislation, was probably the best-trained man, up to that time, to sit on the Court. Justices Holmes, Brandeis, Stone, and Cardozo furnish notable illustration of the principle in more recent times. Chief Justice Taft, himself, was by no means one of the most conservative members of the Court. If the President and the Senate would act with more considerate wisdom than is their wont in the matter of judicial appointments, they could forestall much of the trouble that arises from a Court that at times obstructs the will of the people to a serious degree.

Since the judges actually are human, in spite of the stereotype of almost divine characteristics with which they are endowed in many minds, we may conclude with a recent writer that “The right to ‘cuss’ the Court is a sound feature of our governmental system. . . .” We must have an authoritative tribunal to decide disputed questions, and the Supreme Court seems destined to continue as that tribunal. “But since they may be wrong, the President, the Congress, and the people at large must have the right to say their say about them. Whether we like it or not, they will continue to do so until the character of our institutions or the character of the American people is radically changed.”⁴² The people want someone to save them

⁴¹ William Howard Taft, *Popular Government*, 192. Yale University Press.

⁴² Thomas H. Reed, “The Supreme Court: Arbiter and Target,” *The Annals*, Vol. CLXXXV (1936), 41, 44.

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from themselves, but they will always reserve the right to criticize the saving authority, and their criticism is wholesome both for themselves and for the Supreme Court, which is their constitutional savior.

XXI

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC

THE citizen sees a sign that reads, "The Caravan Theatre, a unit of the Federal Theatre Project." He reads that the Deputy WPA Administrator has said, "I have the feeling that, as long as you and I live, the government is going to support symphonies. And the same thing goes for painting and writing." He hears the voice of the President of the United States coming over the radio saying:

The Seventy-fifth Congress . . . has adjourned.

But . . . the Congress . . . achieved more for the future good of the country than any Congress between the end of the World War and the Spring of 1933.

It improved still further our agricultural laws to give the farmer a fairer share of the national income, to preserve our soil, to provide an all-weather granary. . . . passed a Fair Labor Standards Act. . . . The Congress has coordinated the supervision of commercial aviation and air mail by establishing a new Civil Aeronautics Authority. . . . The Congress set up the United States Housing Authority to . . . help finance large-scale slum clearance and provide low-rent housing for the low-income groups in our cities. . . . The Congress has provided additional funds for the Works Progress Administration, the Public Works Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration. . . .

It is a far cry from the once commonly accepted doctrine of Thomas Paine that government promotes our happiness "*negatively* by restraining our vices," and is at best but "a necessary evil." To Paine and Jefferson and other liberals of the eight-

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eenth century, the government was considered best that governed least, whereas to their conservative contemporaries, the fundamental object of government was thought to be the preservation of property. Now, George Bernard Shaw suggests dramatically in *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* that there is something wrong with a system of distribution under which a hard-working widow with six children is getting two loaves of bread a week while some dissolute young bachelor is wasting enough every day to feed six families a month, and adds that such matters must be settled by law.

In the United States, there has been a noticeable tendency toward increasing legislation affecting a wide variety of human interests and activities ever since the early part of the nineteenth century, but the tendency has been accelerated in the twentieth century. The administration of Theodore Roosevelt coincides with the beginning of the modern period of increasing social legislation by both the federal and state governments. The Safety Appliance Act, the Pure Food and Drugs Act, the Postal Savings Act, and the Mann Act, of the Roosevelt and Taft period, were followed by the statutes of the Wilson administration creating the Federal Reserve Board, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Federal Farm Loan Board. More recently, the Hoover Farm Board, the Federal Communications Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Social Security program, and all the varied activities of the New Deal have given eloquent evidence of the continued expansion of governmental activity. Meanwhile, the states have been similarly engaged. Workmen's compensation laws have modernized certain aspects of the relation between employer and employees. Blue sky laws and laws regulating advertising have been enacted to protect the public. On the subject of food, laws have been enacted regulating beverages, canneries, dairy

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products, eggs, fish, turtles, fruits, hay, ice cream, kosher food, salt, vegetables, vinegar, and almost countless other articles of human consumption. The breadth and depth of governmental activities must force us to agreement with the conclusion of Professor Frankfurter that the tasks of government today are "really different in kind and not merely in degree from those that confronted a government a hundred years ago."¹

In countries where the democratic idea prevails, we assume that public opinion should be carried into effect by the government. This assumption is based on the supposition that the opinion of the whole people is likely to be right more often than the opinion of any one person or any limited group of persons, and that it will certainly be more conducive to the general welfare than the dictates of an individual or an oligarchy. It is assumed further that the people will be more contented and orderly and the laws better obeyed when government acts in accordance with public opinion.

When we consider the program of governmental activity and the relation that it bears to the welfare of the individual citizen, we must never forget the nature of the public whose will it carries out. All sorts and conditions of men go to make up the public. The diversity of their economic interests, their cultural backgrounds, their standards and customs, and their conflicting desires sometimes gives an appearance of confusion to the sovereign voice that the government is supposed to obey. If an "executive with an income of \$1,000 a day" tells us that governmental action requiring a minimum wage of \$11 a week "is going to have a disastrous effect on all American industry," we need to remember that he speaks for only part of the public.

Brand Whitlock illustrated the point in a story that he told of one of his experiences years ago, while he was mayor of Toledo. A wealthy young city official, fresh from luncheon

¹ Felix Frankfurter, *The Public and Its Government*, 27. Yale University Press.

at his club, came into the mayor's office and soberly began "They are saying——." When the mayor asked who was saying, he replied, "The people." The mayor then took him for a drive of two hours through the city. They went through the section where the Poles lived, through the seventh ward, where the shops and factories were, and on through quiet sections, away from the part of the city which the business men knew, passing "blocks and blocks of humble little homes." Then Mr. Whitlock asked his young friend if he knew what the people who lived there were thinking of the administration. When the answer was in the negative, he said, ". . . they are the people, they who live in those little houses with the low roofs. It is important to know how they feel too."²

Since the time of Jefferson, the American people have regarded their national constitution as an instrument of popular government, and government officials as representatives subject to their will. But government in the modern period has become increasingly a matter of administration. A vast machine has had to be created to carry out the enactments of the legislature. This has raised important questions concerning the proper relation between the people and their government.

The President's Committee on Administrative Management wrote in 1937 that "The efficiency of government rests upon two factors: the consent of the governed and good management." They recommended the improvement of federal administrative machinery "to make democracy work . . . to make our Government an up-to-date, efficient, and effective instrument for carrying out the will of the Nation."³

If government is to be an "effective instrument for carrying out the will of the Nation," the policies decided upon by legislative bodies and elected executives must be a reflection of that

² Brand Whitlock, *Forty Years of It*, 208, 209. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

³ *Report of the Committee*, 3, 4. United States Government Printing Office.

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will. In this field, conflict between political parties on issues involved is normal and desirable. The people can then give their verdict at the polls. In the field of judicial interpretation, public opinion exercises less direct control. In the administration of the law, the expressed will of the people should be loyally and effectively carried out, but this function is in the hands of officials who are usually not directly subject to the control of the electorate. Furthermore, they are doing work that the public cannot supervise in detail, both because of its magnitude and its complexity.

Many of the activities that constitute the main stuff of modern government—such as the administration of health laws, the fight against crime, the regulation of utilities, the encouragement of agriculture, education, the establishment of social security—require expert and non-partisan administration. Technical information must be dealt with by men trained for their work. Facts must be disentangled from fiction as reliable information is accumulated and made use of by technicians and interested parties.

Increasingly, we are relying on the government to take care of us. And yet, the common attitude toward government is one of distrust, carrying with it the assumption that governmental activities are characterized almost inevitably by inefficiency and not infrequently by corruption. A few years ago, Will Rogers expressed the popular feeling when he said in a radio talk, "It is better to have termites in your house than to have the legislature in session." This feeling has grown out of repeated experience with inefficient and corrupt legislative bodies. The popular attitude toward administrative officials has generally been at least as suspicious and contemptuous. Politicians have been entrusted with the work that should have been the province of experts. The techniques of administration have not developed so rapidly as the activities of govern-

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ment have expanded. Political administration of the type fairly satisfactory in the comparatively simple days of Andrew Jackson has not proved efficient in our time of expanded governmental activities.

One of the chief problems of our time is how to work out a system of government that will provide efficient administration without destroying popular control. Democracies are traditionally suspicious of long tenure in office. Andrew Jackson expressed an opinion once commonly accepted by those who believed in democratic government when he said in his first annual message to Congress that few men could hold office and power for any great length of time without coming under the influence of feelings unfavorable to the faithful discharge of their duties. ". . . they are apt to acquire a habit of looking with indifference upon the public interests and of tolerating conduct from which an unpracticed man would revolt. Office is considered as a species of property, and government rather as a means of promoting individual interests than as an instrument created solely for the service of the people."⁴

We know now that we cannot have effective administration without security of tenure for expert administrators. Permanent employment and a professional outlook must replace the rotation of amateurs. But the work of the experts must always be subject to "the great common sense" that exists in popular control. Administrative officials left to their own devices tend to become bureaucrats who think of the administrative machine and the routine of business as ends in themselves instead of means to an end. They "will care more for routine than for results."⁵ We are brought back then to the problem

⁴ James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. II, 448, 449. Published by authority of Congress.

⁵ Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution, and other Political Essays*, 261. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

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of popular control that Andrew Jackson thought he could solve by brief tenures in office, but which we cannot solve so simply. We must have experts and seek some other method of control.

Four chief methods of control have been tried. One that gained wide acceptance in the Jacksonian period was the method of popular election. The theory was that officials elected by the people, particularly if for short terms, would be close to the people and responsive to public opinion. In practice, this led to the adoption of state constitutions providing for the election of heads of departments in state governments and to laws and charters providing for the election of every possible local official. This has become farcical as a method of popular control in our time, when the voter not uncommonly is handed a ballot from four to ten feet long and is expected to vote on names and measures from one end of it to the other. Hardly any citizen, no matter how conscientious, can vote intelligently on four feet of names.

Some years ago, in the pre-radio days, a group of substantial citizens in a little Missouri town were discussing politics as they waited at the telephone office for returns from a primary election. "I voted for —," said one of them, "because I saw his picture on a telephone pole."

"I voted for —," said another, "because he sent me a letter."

"I always vote for the first name on the list," said another.

"I don't think that's fair, so I always vote for the last name on the list," said a fourth.

Then they fell to arguing as to whether or not the names of candidates for a particular office appeared in the same order on all the ballots.

These sovereign voters of the commonwealth of Missouri in their facetious enumeration of haphazard methods of voting were not exaggerating conditions that commonly exist. How can the citizen act otherwise when confronted with a list of

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names so long that he could not possibly have become acquainted with even a small proportion of them? Of course, he can refrain from voting at all except when he can vote intelligently, but this sometimes has its drawbacks. A resident of a southern city has said, "When you get your ballot in—you should always vote for somebody for every office whether you know anything about them or not, for you may vote right. If you don't mark your ballot, the bosses will mark it for you, and it is sure to be wrong." Even though conditions may not be so corrupt that election judges or clerks will tamper with the ballots, the system of the long ballot usually makes boss or machine control easy, because the supporters of the boss are told whom to vote for, whereas other citizens vote blindly for many candidates and thus split their strength. Obviously the election of the greatest possible number of officials does not guarantee popular control of government.

The initiative, referendum, and recall are devices that have been used in some American states to supplement the election of officers as means of popular control. Although these devices constitute a possible force for controlling administration, in practice they have generally been used to control policy rather than to enforce efficiency. Even in this field they have not been used enough to justify reliance on them as other than relatively minor and supplementary instrumentalities of democratic control. In the field of administration, their extensive use would be subject to the same objections as the popular election of great numbers of administrative officials.

The legislature is a third channel through which public opinion may exercise control over administration. Members of the legislature, usually elected for short terms, may be depended upon to reflect any strong current of public opinion in their attitude toward the conduct of administrative agencies. We have traditionally depended upon a rule of law to check the

bureaucrats. We have felt safer when administrators were required to conform strictly to the terms of statutes enacted by the legislature. Although this has, to a certain extent, protected us from the worst abuses of bureaucracy, it has not afforded any guarantee either of efficiency or that administration would be carried out in a spirit consistent with the currents of public opinion. In some cases, too, legislative control of administration has been carried to such lengths that it has lessened efficiency without bringing any counterbalancing benefit. For instance, we can be reasonably sure that no good will be served by a provision such as one included in a statute enacted by the Indiana legislature several years ago, specifying the size of the bolts that were to go into a boiler to be installed for the state. The legislature can bring the force of public opinion to play on administration most usefully by deciding on important matters of policy and then watching to see that administrative officials carry those policies into effect in a manner and spirit consistent with the desires of the people.

In European parliamentary governments, administrative departments may be called to account on the floor of the legislature by means of interpellations or questions. In the English House of Commons, any member, subject to certain conditions, may address a question to a minister about the work of his department, supposedly to obtain information. Actually, such questions are often intended to imply criticism and place the minister on the defensive. This device is considered a valuable agency for bringing the searchlight of criticism on executive and administrative officials and a safeguard against maladministration. A minister must constantly be ready to defend his actions and those of his subordinates if he is questioned in the House. Although we do not have such a device in American national or state governments, some students of government

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have suggested that we need something like it in order to insure proper control of the administrative machine.

The late Senator Bronson Cutting, having in mind the wide delegation of power by Congress to administrative agencies, suggested to a national conference of Progressives in 1931 that Congress should establish a continuing joint committee to watch the application of the provisions of the laws by administrative authorities.⁶ Such a committee would supposedly insure administration in accordance with the wishes of the people and reduce the risks of bureaucratic narrowness and indifference in the civil service. The system would also have potentialities for evil, particularly if the committee used their position either to dictate details of administrative procedure or for partisan political advantage.

Another possible legislative check would be to allow the recall of administrative officials by a vote of the legislature. Legislatures already possess the power of impeachment, but this is not used enough to constitute an effective check. In 1912, Dr. Charles McCarthy suggested that the members of a proposed federal trade commission should be subject to recall by Congress, and he expressed a belief that such a plan would eventually be developed, in addition to the democratic program of administration already worked out in Wisconsin.⁷ Since that time, this idea has not gained general acceptance, its disadvantages generally seeming to more than balance its advantages.

Another means of checking administration is through the use of special investigating committees composed of members of the legislature. Such a committee gathers information and

⁶ John M. Gaus, in John M. Gaus, Leonard D. White, and Marshall E. Dimock, *The Frontiers of Public Administration*, 43. University of Chicago Press.

⁷ Charles McCarthy, *The Wisconsin Idea*, 182. The Macmillan Company.

throws open administrative procedure for public scrutiny. State legislatures have not been very successful in exercising any real control over administration in this way. The members are hampered by a lack of knowledge of the inside workings of the departments and have not always been able to force from administrators all the information that may be pertinent. To a certain extent, the House of Representatives of the United States has also failed to use investigating committees effectively. The United States Senate, on the other hand, has raised the investigating function and power to its high point in this country. The oil scandals, Muscle Shoals, civil liberties, and TVA are among the most important subjects of their investigations in recent years. Senators on these committees have shown a zest for their work and have aroused a great deal of public attention, sometimes getting their names in the headlines for weeks at a time. They have also served several useful purposes, among them the education of the public and the creation of a wholesome fear of such investigations, which has doubtless led to a more careful administration of public affairs.

The elected executive is a fourth channel through which administration may be made to respond to public opinion. Many students of government in the modern age, when public officials are numerous and the administrative machine vast and complex, have come to the conclusion that concentration of power in the hands of executive officials offers a solution for the problem of control. The theory is that concentration of power permits public attention to focus on the key positions and the public to hold the men who occupy these positions responsible for the conduct of administration. In substance, the expert is responsible to his chief and the chief is responsible to the public for the conduct of affairs in his department.

The executive officers in governmental units such as the state or the nation in the United States are properly political officers

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chosen because they are in harmony with the current opinions of the electorate. The employees under the department head should be experts who keep clear of partisan politics and are assured of permanent tenure as long as they do their work efficiently. Their business is to advise the chief on matters relating to the department and to carry out loyally any policy that he decides to follow. The department head is not an expert. As an English observer has said, "It is not the business of a Cabinet Minister to work his department. His business is to see that it is properly worked." He is to act as the executive representative of the public in seeing that the policies desired by the people are carried out in the proper spirit and with maximum efficiency. He is to lay down general policies and see that the permanent officials do not get into a rut of routine or out of touch with the people whose servants they are.

Although something is gained by concentration of the control of administration in a few hands, in order that responsibility can be more clearly defined, this alone does not always provide effective control. Actually, although the subordinates in a department are legally responsible to its head and to the law, circumstances tend to make the political head dependent upon his staff "as the nature of the problems increasingly require for their solution an experience and training which the political head rarely possesses."⁸ And the more expert and efficient the staff, the more likely is this tendency to develop.

In England, where the civil service has an enviable reputation for efficiency and achievement, the charge has been made not infrequently that the permanent officials were actually dictating departmental policies. In the United States, such charges are made most frequently against the State Department, which probably comes closer to the English system in the

⁸ John M. Gaus in John M. Gaus, Leonard D. White, and Marshall E. Dimock, *The Frontiers of Public Administration*, 39. University of Chicago Press.

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nature of its permanent non-political staff than most of the departments in the American government.

Illustrative of these accusations were the charges made from various sources in 1938 that a number of career men in key positions in the State Department were exerting a strong pro-fascist influence on the Department. The Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy asserted in a pamphlet dealing with American relations with Spain that President Roosevelt was eager to revoke the embargo on the shipment of arms if assured of sufficient popular support and added, "The most promising move in this direction, according to the syndicated 'Washington Merry-Go-Round' published on April 12th under the bylines of Drew Pearson and Robert Allen, was sabotaged by reactionary influence in the State Department. President Roosevelt and the State Department must be convinced that the great majority of Americans favor the lifting of the embargo."⁹ On May 6, Secretary of State Cordell Hull vigorously defended the government's policies and criticized newspaper charges impugning the integrity of career men in his department. "At one point . . . Mr. Hull, having in mind, it was later explained, charges in some alleged Communist newspapers in this country that some of his aides were pro-Fascist to the point of being 'traitors,' suggested criminal libel."¹⁰

If a department head is led by his staff to adopt a policy contrary to public opinion instead of forcing his staff to follow public opinion, the only remedy is for the people to make their wishes known to the political heads of the government with such force that they cannot be ignored. In a parliamentary government, this can be done in fairly satisfactory manner. In

⁹ *Lift the Embargo Against Spain*, a pamphlet published by Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 5.

¹⁰ *New York Times*, May 7, 1938.

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a government of separated powers, such as that in the United States, public opinion cannot always make itself felt with proper effect against the resistance of an entrenched bureaucracy.

In the field of municipal government, the city manager form now in use in many American cities parallels the English parliamentary system of government in many respects in the way in which it combines expert administration, concentration of power, and popular responsibility. A small council is elected by the people to serve as a policy determining body. They in turn hire a manager, place him in full charge of administration, and hold him responsible for the results. He can be removed at any time by the council if he fails to give the city the kind of service they want. He has the power to run the administrative machine as long as he has the confidence of the people as expressed through their elected representatives—that long and no longer.

In seeking to arrive at an arrangement whereby we can keep the expert "on tap, but not on top," we have at different times and in different localities tried different devices. We have not yet found the perfect solution of our problem. The tendency in modern times has been increasingly to look to the legislature and the political executive officials to enforce the general will on appointed experts. Such a system presupposes an alert and intelligent public with opinions that it will enforce on its elected representatives and see that they carry them on to the experts. The electorate cannot supervise the details of government, but it can choose good leaders and it can lay down the fundamentals of policy and insist on efficient administration.

If the people are to play their part intelligently, if public opinion is to be anything more than an expression of collective ignorance, they must be kept informed of what is happening in government and why it is happening. The functioning of the

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machinery of government must be made visible to the individual citizen. A student of municipal government has said, "A handful of facts have been worth more than a bushel basket full of incensed public opinion: but the two together are invincible."¹¹ One of the most important tasks of modern popular government is to put together the facts and the public opinion.

The citizen finds out something about the working of government by direct contact in everyday life with certain officials and their work. The garbage collector picks up his garbage. He sends his children to the public school. The postman delivers his mail. The relief office keeps his neighbor from starving. From such contacts he may gain definite ideas about the efficiency and needs of different branches of the government. Some of these ideas will be based on casual and incomplete evidence. For instance, he orders a book from the Government Printing Office and gets it six weeks later. He knows that if he had sent a similar order to Sears, Roebuck and Company, he could have had the book back and had it read in six *days*. He therefore concludes that the Government Printing Office is unbusinesslike, inefficient, and utterly indifferent to the feelings of the sovereign people. He sends to the Department of the Interior for material that they have offered to send him and receives no reply until the material arrives a little over a year later. He concludes that the Department of the Interior is a hopeless bureaucracy. He sees WPA workers loafing on the job and concludes that the administration of relief by the Federal Government is economically wasteful and morally enervating. Generally, he remembers most vividly the unpleasant and unfavorable features of his contact with governmental activities.

¹¹ Dr. L. D. Upson, quoted in *Public Reporting*, compiled by the National Committee on Municipal Reporting, 9. Municipal Administration Service.

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The citizen's knowledge of the functioning of government is likely to be supplemented by information that he gains from his association with various non-governmental organizations. Fraternal lodges, churches, commercial organizations, labor unions, civic organizations, or voters' leagues may contribute to his knowledge and influence his opinions. In such organizations, leaders or responsible specialists may make it their business to gain access to information on government activities and scrutinize the more technical aspects in a manner beyond the competence of the other members of the group. These men can find out what is going on and the reasons back of what is going on. They are then in a position to inform the members of their respective groups and lead in a discussion of what should be done about it.¹²

The National League of Women Voters may be taken as an example of an organization that has been active in encouraging the spread of information about the functioning of government, and the discussion of governmental policies and of measures for improving administration. In 1936, they listed among their activities, work on numerous measures before state legislatures and the Congress of the United States, a national campaign "to arouse public opinion to the need for qualified personnel in government," and other activities, including, "Campaigns for permissive county consolidation, for adoption of charters for counties and cities; surveys of personnel practices, of county welfare organization, and of school systems . . . regular visits to city councils and school boards, dissemination of non-partisan information from central booths before election."¹³

¹² Herman C. Beyle, *Governmental Reporting in Chicago*, 4. University of Chicago Press.

¹³ *The National League of Women Voters An Achievement in Citizen Participation in Government*, a pamphlet published by the League, October, 1936.

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Such sources of information, along with newspapers, radio, newsreels, and public meetings are of far from negligible value, but they are not enough. If the electorate are to perform their part as a directing force in government in this modern age of extensive and complicated government activities, additional sources of information must be provided that will stimulate popular interest as well as furnish the factual basis for intelligent opinions. The government itself has a duty to perform in this regard. This it may do through the proper kind of public reporting.

Public reporting is not a new activity, but government reports in the past were ordinarily little more than dry and forbidding aggregations of statistics compiled by some unimaginative clerk to meet the requirements of a statute. They were useful only to students writing Ph.D. theses or persons engaged in similarly technical tasks of tabulating knowledge, and were about as interesting as a telephone directory. The ordinary citizen who might want to get some idea of how the police department functioned or the kind of men it employed would get no help from such reports. The citizen who looked for intelligible information on work of the health department would be confronted with columns of figures. Such reports, of course, contributed hardly anything to the enlightenment of the electorate.

In recent years, officials and students of public affairs, especially in the field of municipal government, have developed new techniques of government reporting. The trend is toward printed reports that are both readable and useful. The work of the city government is made vivid to the citizen. In some cities, printed reports have been supplemented by the use of the radio and motion pictures. Government is descending into the market place to bring a new intimate knowledge of its

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functioning to the citizen, a knowledge perhaps unequalled since the days of the town meeting government.

The city of Detroit, for instance, filmed several reels that were run in movie theaters in serial form. In this manner, the officials were able to give to thousands of citizens, who might not otherwise have been reached, a vivid picture of the city's contribution to community life. A picture of a small child being run down in the street dramatically illustrated the services of the policeman on the beat, the city ambulance, and the city hospital, whose staff cared for him and released him two weeks later in good condition. Another city has used films not only to bring home to the citizen the ordinary municipal services but also those of the municipally owned electric light plant.¹⁴

Mayor Daniel W. Hoan, of Milwaukee, one of the most successful as well as one of the most experienced of American city officials, has listed some of the methods that should be used by a municipal government to keep the people informed. He suggests that the radio should be used as often as possible for the explanation of the administration's policies or program. Leaflets and publications may be used to spread facts about the government among the people. A well-written circular explaining in detail where the money goes may be attached to the tax bill. He says that his office has on rare occasions written and had distributed from door to door pamphlets explaining vital issues involved in current questions in which the average citizen has a great concern. He emphasizes his belief that a continuous effort should be made to educate the public in the objectives that the government seeks to accomplish as well as in the value of its services. In his city, he went further and helped establish a Mayor's Advisory Council composed of rep-

¹⁴ Clarence E. Ridley, "Municipal Reporting Taken Seriously," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. I (January, 1937), 113, 114.

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representatives from civic and service groups within the community. This group became a forum that listened to both sides of controversial questions and then discussed them. It served the double purpose of providing the mayor and other city officials with a medium through which they could readily discover the opinions of the people and of bringing the civic groups represented into contact with "the real life and heart of municipal government." Further, it made the government more independent of the press and the privilege-seeking interests of the city.¹⁵

Since the beginning of the Roosevelt administration in 1932, the Federal Government has engaged in a program of public reporting that makes use of various means of communication and is designed to make the public aware of what the government is doing and to build up favorable attitudes toward its policies. A typical Roosevelt fireside chat over the radio begins, "As part of the democratic process, your President is again taking an opportunity to report on the progress of national affairs to the real rulers of this country—the voting public." These "reports" have reached a large proportion of the electorate directly and have undoubtedly been an important force in molding public opinion. In addition to the President's fireside chats and the use of the radio by other officials, the government, under the Roosevelt administration, has used motion pictures, contact with the newspapers, and other channels of communication to keep the public informed on a more extensive scale than any previous administration.

The government now has a staff of experienced publicity men in every bureau. The ordinary everyday public relations of the national administrative agencies consist mainly of the relations between the newspaper correspondents in Washington and the public relations employees of the government. This

¹⁵ Daniel W. Hoan, *City Government*, 111-14. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

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is supplemented by the direct conferences of the journalists with the President and other leading officials, "but in the main, the view of the Government presented to the public is the product of what goes on between the official publicity men within the Government and the professional correspondents stationed at the Capital." The news that reaches the public by this route goes through a two-fold selective process. The publicity agents largely determine the manner and form of the news that goes out from their bureaus, whereas the correspondents in their dispatches emphasize the dramatic events, the fumbles or the brilliant plays, that give fascination to the game of politics.¹⁶

The scope of the Federal Government's publicity activities was revealed in a study completed in 1937 by the Brookings Institution for the Senate's Select Committee to Investigate the Executive Agencies of the Government.¹⁷ According to their report, "during the fiscal year 1936 the expenditures for salaries of persons who were engaged solely in publicity work or a part of whose time was allocated to that purpose amounted to \$521,000." In addition, \$81,000 went for salaries of persons partly employed on publicity work, but whose time was not allocated to it. The number of persons engaged wholly in publicity work was 146, while 124 persons were partly so engaged. Salaries of \$5,000 or more were being paid to twenty-six persons engaged wholly in publicity work. The directing heads of publicity agencies were usually men with extensive newspaper experience, in many cases being former Washington correspondents. The figures given did not include any for the Works Progress Administration, which failed to submit a report of its publicity activities. Neither did it cover offices out-

¹⁶ E. Pendleton Herring, "Official Publicity Under the New Deal," *The Annals*, Vol. CLXXIX (1935), *Pressure Groups and Propaganda*, 167, 168.

¹⁷ Senate Report 1275, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 529-53.

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side the District of Columbia, except for the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The government has also engaged in the production of motion picture films of an informational nature. On July 31, 1936, a list was issued giving the titles of 533 films available through government departments. Of these, 307 were in the Department of Agriculture. During the fiscal year ended June 30, 1936, more than \$200,000 was spent on the production and distribution of films. Probably the most spectacular film produced was "The Plow that Broke the Plains," prepared by the Resettlement Administration. Its production cost \$40,000. "The most extensive distribution of motion-picture films ever undertaken by a Government agency was made by the Social Security Board in connection with the film entitled, 'We, the People, and Social Security.'" This film seems to have been shown more than any other government motion picture. It was offered to all motion picture theaters for exhibition free of charge, with transportation costs both ways paid by the government.

Meanwhile, the radio has not been neglected as a channel for publicity. So far as is known, the government has not made any expenditures for the purchase of radio time, but considerable amounts have been spent on the preparation of programs and the manufacture of electrical transcripts. The Department of Agriculture apparently leads all government agencies in the use of radio time. It uses the well-known chains and co-operates with more than 300 independent stations in broadcasting agricultural information and crop and market reports. The Department of the Interior, Federal Housing Administration, and the Resettlement Administration have also made considerable use of the radio. All together, approximately \$150,000 is spent annually on radio activities.

In regard to the publicity activities of the Federal Govern-

ment, the report of the Brookings Institution concludes, "The furnishing of facts is undoubtedly a proper duty of a Government agency, but the expenditure of over \$500,000 a year for personal services for publicity work and the issuance of 4,794 releases in 3 months seems to indicate that, if possible, some controlling mechanism should be set up." Although most of the publicity is doubtless a legitimate dissemination of facts, the possibility of abuse exists. The whole set-up might be turned into a vast propaganda machine for the party in power. However, the setting up of a "controlling mechanism" that will be effective and yet do more good than harm is a difficult task, and the Brookings report offers no very satisfactory solution of the problems involved.

One student of government who views with apprehension "a development which places great powers of persuasion in the administrative branch and brings no countervailing force on the other side," has emphasized the importance of restoring the balance in the formulation of public opinion by providing some means for getting the views of the opposition before the public. The opposition as well as the administration should have competent public relations machinery.¹⁸ Critics of the administration in power are perhaps inclined to be a little unduly fearful of the publicity activities of the government. But it is better, on the whole, to be too suspicious than to be too trusting, for we certainly do not want any system to grow up that will even remotely approach that in vogue in the dictator-governed countries, where a Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda feeds the people whatever mixture of lies and facts the party in power thinks will best serve its interests. However, in the United States, where both the major political parties maintain publicity staffs under the direction of skillful and

¹⁸ E. Pendleton Herring, "Official Publicity Under the New Deal," *The Annals*, Vol. CLXXIX (1935), *Pressure Groups and Propaganda*, 172-5.

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high-salaried publicity experts, and congressmen remain highly vocal, it may be assumed that the opposition will be able to turn a critical light on public reporting that is distorted to serve the purposes of propaganda. Such abuse may be turned into a weapon against the administration. The fact that abuse is possible should not lead to a curtailment of reporting, for the government has not only a right but a duty to explain its activities to the public in the most vivid manner possible.

And what of the citizen's part in the maintenance of popular control of his ever-expanding government? It is not enough that he sit back and be spoon-fed on facts, if that be possible. Good government requires discussion of public questions and prying into the dark places. It requires citizens intelligent enough and public spirited enough to disregard outworn symbols and meaningless party labels. It requires citizen organization.

The testimony of those who have led in municipal government reform is particularly emphatic. Mayor Hoan, of Milwaukee, declares that if the people of a city do not get the good government that a majority of them may be assumed to want, it is because they are not organized effectively. He adds further that popular forces fighting for competent municipal government must continue "to back both candidates and policies even more strenuously after election day than before."¹⁹ From Cincinnati, where a popular campaign to secure and maintain good administration has been notably successful, comes corroboration of Mayor Hoan's experience. A citizen's party dissociated from any political machine and divorced from national politics has been responsible for Cincinnati's enviable record in municipal government. According to one of the leaders in the movement, they have proved "that the way to

¹⁹ Daniel W. Hoan, *City Government*, 57, 65. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

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improve municipal administration is to improve the method of citizen organization." ²⁰ Alert, intelligent, and aggressive citizen activity with organization to channel its power is necessary to popular control of the government.

If the control is to be democratic, each individual will be free to form his own conclusion as to what the government should do and be equally free to cast his vote and contribute his influence to public opinion in accordance with his judgment. But a question may well be raised at this point as to whether conditions do not now exist that make this impossible in the case of many people. Two illustrations may make the point clear.

The New York Times of June 28, 1938, reported the Deputy WPA Administrator of the United States as having said to an organization of WPA workers that "many things would have been straightened out" if President Roosevelt had received the support he should have had. He urged the workers to organize and to vote to "keep our friends in power." *The New York Times*, discussing the Deputy Administrator's speech, said editorially the next day, "The gross impropriety of such statements from an appointed officeholder disbursing large sums of Federal money for relief is obvious."

In the midst of the Presidential campaign of 1932, the Ford Motor Company posted on its bulletin boards a notice that, after declaring that the company was not interested in partisan politics, said:

We feel, however, that the coming election is so important to industry and employment that our employees should know our views.

President Hoover has overcome the forces that almost destroyed industry and employment. His efforts to start the country back to work are beginning to show results.

We are convinced that any break in his program would hurt in-

²⁰ Henry Bentley, "When Citizens Unite," *The Survey*, Graphic Number, Vol. LXVII (1931), 50.

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dustry and employment. To prevent times from getting worse and to help them to get better President Hoover must be elected.²¹

The Democrats regarded this attempt of a corporation to influence its employees as a gross impropriety that the public would condemn, and the Socialists termed it "the most brazen instance of industrial feudalism in recent years."²²

In both cases, the citizens on whom the influence was being exerted were economically insecure. In both cases, persons in control of their livelihood were putting pressure on them to vote "right." A man who is economically insecure is not free to resist such pressure. He is not free to form reasonable conclusions about government policies and administrative efficiency and vote according to his conclusions. He is not a free man.

The government itself is being forced by popular demand to deal with the problem of economic security for the citizens whom it represents. Free men are essential to democracy. They have a particularly important part to play in a period when government is growing steadily more vast and more complex. Only popular control will keep the vast machine functioning for the general welfare. The relation between citizens and government in a democracy is the relation between master and servant, with the citizens as master and the government as servant—in modern times a highly mechanized and elaborate servant but a servant none the less.

Political leaders and thinkers are divided in their attitude toward the tendencies of modern government. Those who are conservative view the great increase in governmental activity with pessimism or alarm. Among the leaders of this school of thought, none is entitled to more respect than the late Newton D. Baker. In 1934, he wrote an article under the expressive title, "The Decay of Self-Reliance," in which he deplored the

²¹ *New York Times*, October 18, 1932.

²² *Ibid.*, October 19, 1932.

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tendency of different groups to look to the government "as the source of well-being." To him, life in any constructive sense was a struggle and liberty the proper end of government. But he felt that the popular view had come to be one that looked upon the state as "carrier of all individual, group, and class burdens."²³ Such a philosophy goes back essentially to the eighteenth century belief that government is a necessary evil that should be restricted as far as possible to negative rather than positive activity. It sees in present tendencies evidence of the decay of the qualities of mind and character that enabled our pioneer forefathers to build the America that we know.

On the other hand, the viewpoint that is in the ascendent regards the state as a great public service corporation that exists to serve the people in any desirable way in which they feel that it can serve them better than they can serve themselves and better than any other agency can serve them. Those who accept this view do not see any cause for alarm in the fact that conditions of modern life make it impossible for individuals to do as many things for themselves as their grandfathers did and that they are using the government instead of some other group agency to accomplish their purposes.

So long as the state remains a public service corporation, it is important that the techniques of popular control keep pace with the increasing expansion of government. If the whole people have the facilities for getting information on the activities and policies of government and complementary facilities for making their wishes effective, they will remain in control of the machine and see that it takes them in the direction they want to go. In a democracy, the supposition is that no other relation between the government and its citizens will, in the long run, prove so satisfactory as this.

²³ *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. CLIV (1934), 726-33.

XXII

PUBLIC OPINION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ADDRESSING the Peace Conference at the close of the World War, President Wilson declared to the assembled delegates that they were not representatives of governments but of peoples, and said further, "It will not suffice to satisfy governmental circles anywhere. It is necessary that we should satisfy the opinion of mankind."¹ In those days, it seemed to the President and the idealists that an era had begun in which the opinions of the masses of the people were going to control both national and international affairs. A world public opinion had come into being.

Much water has gone over the dam since then. The world is now divided by irreconcilable philosophies of dictatorship and democracy. If there ever was an "opinion of mankind," it no longer exists. In the dictatorships, opinion is manufactured almost at will by the ruling party to suit its purposes. In the democracies, the opinion of the people still controls government in the same vital sense in which President Wilson conceived of its control. But public opinion is now essentially national rather than international in scope.

In the field of foreign relations, public opinion is especially decisive in the United States. Secretary of State Cordell Hull recognized the American spirit when he said, ". . . the direction of our foreign policy must be acceptable to the people. Our task is to formulate out of the wishes and wisdom of a popular democracy a sound foreign policy which will insure

¹ January 25, 1919. *War and Peace*, Vol. I, 395, 396. Harper & Brothers.

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peace and favor progress and prosperity.”² The author of a recent magazine article expressed the feeling of the people when he wrote of the government’s foreign policy, “This is our business. We fight the wars; we pay the bills.”³

In the other democratic countries, particularly in England, the government is relatively more independent of popular opinion on foreign affairs. An English cabinet, so long as it does not go too far or do anything too spectacular, can chart its course and take the country along with it for a considerable time almost regardless of public opinion. The policy of the Conservative government after 1935 may be cited as an illustration. The English people expressed themselves in the great peace referendum conducted by the League of Nations Union in 1934-35 as being 96 per cent for membership in the League of Nations, 86 per cent in favor of the use of economic sanctions to stop an aggressor nation, and 58 per cent in favor of the use of military sanctions if necessary to stop an aggressor nation. When the cynical Hoare-Laval proposal for the settlement of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict in a manner entirely contrary to the spirit of the opinions expressed in this referendum led to a tremendous outburst of popular protest and forced the resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare, public opinion appeared to be supreme in foreign affairs. *The New York Times* was led to say editorially on December 29, 1935, “This demonstrated that some diplomatic proposals an outraged public opinion simply would not endure.” Although it did undoubtedly demonstrate that there were certain acts that the British public could not, and would not, stomach, the Conservative government under Prime Minister Chamberlain’s leadership proceeded to demonstrate that the spirit of the opinion expressed in the

² *New York Times*, September 16, 1936.

³ Hubert Herring, “Where Are You Going, Mr. President?” *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 652.

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referendum could be ignored with impunity for a period of years as long as no spectacular event happened to call down upon its head the concentrated wrath of the people. The government pursued a pro-facist and almost anti-League of Nations policy, with step after step taken in apparent disregard for the will of the people.

In the United States, public opinion follows the lead of the government in many matters of foreign relations, or at least acquiesces in a course of action taken, but because of the strong isolationist tradition, and similar forces, the people are more than ordinarily suspicious of their government's moves in international affairs. And they make their opinions felt. For example, in 1927, disputes with Mexico over oil and land claims, protection of American citizens against violence, and arms embargoes had reached a point where peaceful solution seemed almost impossible. When the people realized that the government was apparently leading them into a war with Mexico, a deluge of protests descended upon Washington. This outpouring of popular feeling was so great that it made itself felt in senatorial demands for a modification of policy and led to a sharp change of the administration's attitude. The result was a speedy restoration of cordial relations between the United States and Mexico.

The American Senate is one of the most important channels through which public opinion can make itself effective. The Senate's power is twofold. It can kill or mutilate treaties with relative ease, and it is an effective sounding board for all shades of opinions on foreign relations at any time. The Senate's influence is not altogether wholesome. It is a jealous and cantankerous body when it deals with foreign affairs. But the system is such that a President can rarely "put anything over" on the people. Debates in the Senate not only reflect public opinion, but arouse popular interest and place information

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(and misinformation) before the public. As a result, the executive cannot take any very drastic steps in international relations without the support of the people.

Notwithstanding the power that the people exert in the foreign policies of the United States, the formation of intelligent public opinion on such matters is more difficult than the formation of reasonable opinion on matters closer home. The formation of intelligent opinion depends largely on the ability of the people to get the facts and on the interest that they show in them. In the field of foreign affairs, accurate information is often difficult to obtain and public interest is, on the whole, considerably less than in domestic matters. The average citizen is more interested in the factors that come closer to the bread-and-butter side of his life than in international affairs. Of course, the spectacular happenings abroad arouse his interest and appeal to his imagination. He is interested in wars and rumors of wars, but not in the great number of problems that arise in the day-by-day intercourse of nations. Under such conditions, the formation of intelligent public opinion is not only difficult, but the field is open for demagogues to stir the prejudices of the people and arouse them to action based on emotions with little factual background.

We may assume that there can be no public opinion at all on many international problems. Complicated factors are involved, which, perhaps, cannot be understood without a thorough knowledge of events and of historic background that is not available to the general public. This does not mean that the people can have no voice in decisions made, nor that their voice will necessarily be the meddlesome voice of ignorance. As international relations are conducted, "There emerge from these problems from time to time broad and comparatively simple issues which the people must decide and with respect to which, it has been found, their fundamental common sense

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asserts itself as it has proved to do with respect to their domestic concerns.”⁴ The business of officials in charge of the day-by-day conduct of foreign relations is to use their best judgment in deciding questions as they arise, making their decisions in harmony with the principles which public opinion has declared should control. The people can have no opinion on the details, but they can have a very intelligent and forceful opinion on the principles, and they can see that officials are chosen who will loyally carry out those principles.

The foreign policies of the United States, like those of every other country, are based primarily on self-interest or, as it is sometimes called, “the national interest.” Realistic statesmen from George Washington’s time to the present have affirmed this fact. Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy stated it plainly in 1938, when he declared in London that “any stand the American people takes will be based primarily on the fundamental and firm ground of national interest, which is the soundest basis for relations between nations.” In regard to a possible future war, he said further, “Nevertheless, if the nations should again become engulfed in the cataclysm of a general war, we should make ourselves very strong and then pursue whatever course we considered the best for the United States.”⁵

There is not always general agreement as to what constitutes the national interest. The average citizen may believe that the maintenance of peace is the essence of it. In practice, it often seems to consist of the many American private interests engaged in trade, industry, agriculture, and making investments in foreign countries.⁶ But these interests sometimes conflict with one another, and when they do, conflicting pressures are

⁴ Dewitt C. Poole, *The Conduct of Foreign Relations Under Modern Democratic Conditions*, 142. Yale University Press.

⁵ *New York Times*, March 19, 1938.

⁶ Charles A. Beard, *American Government and Politics*, seventh edition, 291. The Macmillan Company.

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brought to bear upon the government as various attempts are made to influence its policies. The result at any given time may be the pursuit of a policy that is contrary to the interests of a large portion of the people.

A further complicating factor is the American sense of idealism born of the racial heritage of the people and the country's geographical isolation from threatening neighbors. Americans like to pitch their important international policies on a high moral plane. To the masses of the people, the thought of going to war for commercial interests is revolting. They must go to war not "to save our own skins," but "to make the world safe for democracy." In 1848, the United States emerged from a war with Mexico with over half of what had been Mexico, but the American sense of idealism prompted the payment of fifteen million dollars to the defeated people. In 1898, the United States fought a little war with Spain and got Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands. Although statesmen were not indifferent to "the commercial opportunity" and the possibility of "the enlargement of American trade," American public opinion was appealed to with the happy thought that destiny had called the nation to the high tasks of educating, civilizing, and Christianizing the benighted Filipinos, and of bringing progress and good government to the hitherto oppressed Puerto Ricans. The payment of twenty million dollars to Spain for the territory that had been taken from her was further evidence of American idealism. Although national interest guides the statesmen, the full force of public opinion can never be completely mobilized without a moral appeal.

Perhaps the most conspicuous thread running through American foreign policy from the beginning to the present is isolationism. This is a result of historical development and geographic location. When the United States began its career as a nation, it was comparatively weak and might expect to be gob-

bled up if it became involved in the quarrels of the great powers in Europe. The natural tendency was for the Americans to take advantage of their geographical remoteness from Europe and to make every effort to remain neutral when trouble arose. But trade and shipping interests grew apace and as early as 1812 demonstrated the impossibility of complete aloofness. However, for about a hundred years after independence was won, the United States managed generally to avoid involvement in international complications abroad, and the forces making for isolation remained dominant. All the while, foreign trade was gradually increasing in value and the means of communication were being improved, but for a long time these forces were not strong enough to bring about the pursuit of positive policies in conflict with the traditional isolation.

By about 1880, the pressure for international political action began to bring tangible results. The new trend was first noticeable in increased co-operation with other countries. Until 1884, the United States had participated officially in only two international conferences. In the next thirty years, it was represented in twenty-eight. Today the number is likely to range between twenty and sixty in a single year.⁷ The Spanish-American War, with the resultant American acquisition of territory in Asiatic waters, marked the definite emergence of the United States as a world power. The World War demonstrated the impossibility of isolation from world affairs in the modern age. But the people still clung to the idea of isolation. Economically, American interests were inextricably international. Improved methods of communication had greatly lessened geographic isolation. In every way except psycholog-

⁷ Benjamin H. Williams, *American Diplomacy*, 19. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

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ically, the United States had passed from isolation to internationalism.

Actual interdependence has existed side by side with a popular desire for isolation and an incomplete realization of the impossibility of it. Sometimes the result has been the pursuit of seemingly contradictory policies. The President and the state department, who deal directly with foreign affairs, have been consistently more internationalist in outlook than Congress. Congress reflects more closely the isolationist outlook of the people, and congressmen sometimes nurture it for political reasons.

The executive branch of the government has never followed a thoroughgoing isolationist policy since Jefferson wiped out the Barbary pirates in 1803. In 1843, President Tyler sent Caleb Cushing to open up China to American trade. A few years later, Commodore Perry was sent to Japan on a similar mission. American delegates played a leading part in the peace conferences held at the Hague in 1899 and 1907. Theodore Roosevelt and other American statesmen were among the first leaders of modern times to advance the idea of a league of nations to enforce peace. Then Woodrow Wilson led in the actual formation of the League of Nations. The plan for the Permanent Court of International Justice was drafted by a committee under the leadership of Elihu Root, a former Secretary of State of the United States. American leadership has been in advance of public opinion in moving away from isolationism.

In 1920, by its rejection of the League of Nations Covenant, the Senate decisively rebuked President Wilson's policy of participation in international affairs, but even that decisive blow did not end the conflict between the forces of isolation and those of internationalism. Congress remained the guardian of iso-

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lation while the Presidents strained toward international co-operation. Repeatedly, the Senate rejected Presidential suggestions for adherence to the Permanent Court of International Justice. In 1934, Congress passed the Johnson Act, forbidding American loans to defaulting debtor nations. In 1935, Congress passed a neutrality act designed to insulate the United States from foreign quarrels.

While Congress was thus making its attitude clear, the administrations of successive Presidents were involving the nation in world affairs. In 1921-22, the Washington Conference met under American leadership and drafted the Nine Power Treaty, which was designed to preserve the territorial integrity of China. In 1928, Secretary of State Kellogg played a leading part in bringing about the adoption of the Pact of Paris, "the Kellogg Pact." When Japan moved into Manchuria, Secretary of State Stimson even got ahead of the League of Nations in rebuking the aggressor. The Roosevelt administration continued participation in world conferences and in attempts to stop aggression.⁸ Throughout this period from Harding to Roosevelt, American co-operation with the League of Nations was steadily growing.

Although isolationism has been a dominant note in the American attitude toward foreign relations, the policy of the United States has varied by regions. In fact, three regional policies are clearly discernible, one for Europe, one for the Pacific and the Far East, and another for the Americas. Isolationism has been most emphasized in the policy toward Europe. Toward Pacific affairs, American policy has generally been one of interested participation. In the Western Hemisphere, the United States has attempted to keep European and Asiatic influence at a minimum. Toward the lesser nations of Central

⁸ See Hubert Herring, "Where Are You Going, Mr. President?" *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 654.

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and South America, the attitude has been that of big brother, neighborhood bully, or good neighbor, depending upon circumstances and the administration in power in Washington. Isolationism has never been taken to imply aloofness from inter-American affairs.

American isolation originally meant isolation from European entanglements, because the only great powers in the world were European powers. In time, Asia came to occupy an important place in world politics, but because of the traditional popular feeling and various other factors, the popular demand for isolation from European affairs has been stronger than the desire for isolation from Asiatic affairs. Among these factors were the almost perpetual tendency of European nations to divide themselves into two armed camps of powerful rivals, the fact that there were no points in Europe of strategic value to the United States, and doubt that American economic interests in Europe would be benefited by vigorous participation in European political affairs.

American public opinion was forcibly expressed in the rejection of the League of Nations covenant and in the early attitude of the country toward the League. The League was regarded as a European-dominated organization, and so great was the hostility of many opponents of American entrance that they actually hoped that the League would be a failure even though the United States remained outside. At the beginning of the Harding administration, there was a widespread fear that clever and unscrupulous European statesmen might somehow inveigle the United States into associations with the League that would eventually draw the country into membership almost in spite of itself. This apprehension was reflected in the attitude of the Harding administration, which for a time did not even acknowledge communications addressed to the government by the League of Nations. No other non-member

nation in the world went to such extremes to show its hostility.

Professor Bassett describes a happening that illustrates the American state of mind at that time. A United States minister to a European government who happened to be in Geneva in the early days of the League's existence was walking one day with an American, an official at the Secretariat, whom he knew. He discovered that the official had a certain document that he wished to see. "How can I get it?" he asked. The employee of the Secretariat said, "Come into my office and read it." The American minister's reply was, "But I cannot do that, someone will see me and my action will be misunderstood." Finally, he stood on the sidewalk while the document was brought to him. When he read it through, he said that it had an Annex that he would like to see also. Again he waited on the sidewalk and the Annex was brought to him. The significant thing about the minister's action was not its apparent ridiculousness but its prudence. If he had gone into the Secretariat, a report might have reached Washington that he was frequenting the headquarters of the League of Nations. Such a report could have been used against him with great effect by his political enemies.⁹

The extreme policy of fearful aloofness could not be permanently maintained, of course. The League was a going concern dealing with matters of world importance, many of which were of great interest to the United States. Gradually the government began to edge toward a policy of co-operation. Some six months after President Harding's inauguration, communications from the League's Secretariat were formally acknowledged. In 1923, representatives were sent from Washington to participate unofficially in the consideration of certain social and economic subjects. In 1924, official delegates were sent to the Second Opium Conference at Geneva. Since that

⁹ John Spencer Bassett, *The League of Nations*, 337. Longmans, Green & Company.

time, American co-operation has taken various forms. At times, American representatives have even participated in the work of the Council of the League. American co-operation has been mainly in humanitarian activities and in matters of universal regulation such as disarmament. Participation in the settlement of dangerous European political controversies has been avoided.

How far the people of the United States approve of active co-operation with the League is open to question, but there is no doubt that public opinion has been strongly opposed to American entrance into the League ever since 1919. Important elements in the population have favored joining the League, of course. In the main, they have consisted of the people most interested in foreign relations and those who were most idealistic. A lecturer at the University of Chicago in 1930 estimated that at least two-thirds of his audience would vote for American entrance into the League. Citing the experience of a foreign lecturer in the United States, he asserted that almost any group of college students interested enough to attend a lecture by a foreign scholar on international affairs would be in favor of the United States joining the League, as would the average study group in a Protestant church. "But," he said, "just imagine the tremendous majority against the League which would be cast by the American Rotarians who are now meeting in your great city!"¹⁰

However, the most conclusive evidence of American public opinion is to be found in the attitude of the politicians. They are professional evaluators of public opinion. Many candidates have been elected on platforms of opposition to the League of Nations, but no candidate since 1920 has been known to advo-

¹⁰ George H. Blakeslee, "The Foreign Policy of the United States," in *Interpretations of American Foreign Policy*, edited by Quincy Wright, 10, 11. University of Chicago Press.

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cate American entrance as a vote-getting issue. Even the friends of the League admitted that the people were against it. When, early in 1932, Newton D. Baker and Franklin D. Roosevelt, both considered Presidential possibilities and both formerly strong advocates of the League, let it be known that they were not then in favor of American entrance, *Time* declared that they had made plain the anxiety of Democratic Presidential candidates to keep the "ghostly old issue" buried.¹¹ The admission of such a staunch advocate of the League as Mr. Baker that public opinion was against American entrance into the League was almost conclusive evidence that such was the case.

The refusal of the European countries to pay their war debts to the United States has strengthened the feeling among the American people that the path of isolation from European political affairs is best for them. This may have been a determining factor in keeping the United States out of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Certainly it did much to destroy the confidence of the American people in the integrity of the European states.

The average citizen thinks of moral and economic standards in terms of individual standards of conduct. To him, the story of the war debts is something like this: You lend a friend money when he is in trouble. When the trouble is over, he not only refuses to pay you but buys himself a new car, paints his house, and starts filling his back yard with brickbats in preparation for future trouble. To cap it all, he goes to church regularly on Sunday, not to repent, but to take his place in his regular pew with nonchalant disregard of the fact that he has been guilty of swindling, embezzlement, and grand larceny. Historians and economists may write a more complicated story of the World War and war debts, but to the average American,

¹¹ *Time*, February 15, 1932, 19.

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the heart of the matter is in the parable given. He feels that his country has been a sucker, and he does not want it to repeat the performance.

The popular feeling was expressed by the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1936 in an editorial discussing a move in the French Chamber of Deputies looking toward a reopening of the debt question with the United States. To *The Constitution* it seemed that the move was born of France's critical position in the troubled affairs of Europe. She was turning again to the United States as she had done in 1917. "But America," said the editorial, "will not be so easily won again. If France really wants to resume payment of her war debt—good! We will take it, because it is a just debt; but so far as lending France any more money, or getting involved in another European conflict the Paris government will learn that we are no longer of a mind to come to the rescue of any of the selfish and self-centered nations of Europe."¹²

Senator Bone cited the war debt experience in 1937 when he was speaking in favor of strengthening neutrality legislation. Recognizing that trade interests are more likely to involve the United States in a world war than any other factor, he favored a measure that would lessen this risk, because, he contended, it was not worth the cost. Referring to American experience in the last war he said:

The war trade was a lovely thing; the cash was coming in; everybody was happy. Twelve billion dollars were borrowed by belligerent nations from us, and I suspect that some of our 'big shots' are heartbroken that they could not at that time also lend money to Germany. . . .

Where did the Allies get that money from the United States and where did the United States get it? It was the proceeds of Liberty

¹² *Constitution* (Atlanta, Georgia), November 27, 1936.

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bonds. Who is paying those bonds? The American people. Every nickel of the \$12,000,000,000 of foreign trade that everybody wants to fight for, that constitute our sacred 'rights' . . . is being paid for every day by Americans . . .¹³

The aggressive course of the fascist dictators has led a considerable number of Americans to modify their dependence upon aloofness from European affairs as a policy of salvation. Many have come reluctantly to the conclusion that there will be eventually a showdown between the democracies and the dictatorships. They are afraid that the United States will be unable to remain aloof, because American interests, perhaps very close to home, will be threatened. Even the nationalistic and isolationist *Chicago Daily Tribune* declared editorially on December 1, 1936, that the dictators might threaten the Western Hemisphere at any time, and said, "Americans cannot look with unconcern upon events as they rapidly unfold themselves in Europe." In 1938, the veteran pacifist, Senator George Norris, said, "Although I could never favor voting to put this country to war again on a foreign field, twenty or thirty years from now when a younger generation is . . . resisting a Fascist wave of aggression against us, those Americans of that day may wish we had defeated fascism in its infancy."¹⁴ And so the desire for isolation struggles with the fact of world involvement.

In the Pacific and the Far East, the United States government has never followed an isolationist policy since China and Japan were opened for trade with the Western world. The United States officially considers itself a Pacific power and participates in all important international conferences involving Far Eastern questions. Technical justification for this position is to be found in the possession of Hawaii and the Philippine Islands. Of more real importance is the American commercial stake in

¹³*Congressional Record*, March 3, 1937, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 2246.

¹⁴*New York Times*, July 17, 1938, IV, 2.

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the Far East and, so far as popular attention is concerned, the missionary interests. Out of American participation in Asiatic affairs have grown two settled foreign policies, the Open Door and the Integrity of China.

American interest in China has been based on expectation of alluring future markets rather than on contemporary American economic interests. American investments in China are much less than those in Cuba, for instance, whereas trade with China has constituted not more than 3 or 4 per cent of the total foreign trade of the United States in recent years.¹⁵ But there has always been the possibility that China would some day adopt modern methods of living and open up a vast new market for Western goods. Almost a fourth of the population of the world are there. They constitute a potential salesman's paradise, and the United States has insisted that the door for American salesmen be kept open.

Since the Russo-Japanese War revealed the strength of Japan and her intention to increase her influence in the Far East, the United States has looked upon Japan as a power to be watched. As early as 1907, jingoes were talking of the possibility of war. Captain Richmond P. Hobson, Spanish-American War hero, declared that if war came at that time, Japan could easily whip the United States in the Pacific and that President Theodore Roosevelt was trying to avoid hostilities because he was aware of the fact. He asserted that Japan already had an army in the Hawaiian Islands, which had filtered in as coolies. Most of the newspapers at that time ridiculed the war talk, but many of them also advocated a policy of preparedness. The discussion was enough to make the American people uneasy.¹⁶

War scares have come periodically in the years since then,

¹⁵ Benjamin H. Williams, *American Diplomacy*, 124. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

¹⁶ Eleanor Tupper and George E. McReynolds, *Japan in American Public Opinion*, 33. The Macmillan Company.

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and Captain Hobson's statements, with variations and additions, have been repeated by numerous speakers and writers who have gone about stirring up apprehension. Not infrequently the war talk grows most ominous at times when big navy advocates are campaigning for increased naval appropriations.

The attitude of the people of the United States toward Japan has grown from one of friendliness to one of suspicion and, in many quarters, of actual hostility. Until the Russo-Japanese War, American sentiment was predominantly friendly. Japan's attitude at the peace conference that ended the war impressed the American public as aggressive and unidealistic and aroused a feeling of distrust. Not long afterward, trouble arose in California over Japanese immigration. Many Californians objected to having Japanese in the same schools with white children, and organized labor started agitation for the exclusion of the Japanese because of their competition as laborers. The southern states, because of their Negro problem, were inclined to sympathize with California, whereas the rest of the country, particularly the commercial centers, were critical of the agitation and the discrimination. In 1907, a number of American battleships visited Japan, and although feeling in the United States was at first rather tense, the cordial reception given by the Japanese resulted in a better feeling between the two countries.¹⁷

In 1913, the problem in California again became acute, resulting finally in the passage of a statute that denied the privilege of owning land to aliens ineligible to citizenship and restricted their rights to lease land. The eastern part of the United States was opposed to such measures, the Middle West was divided, whereas the southerners were again sympathetic.

¹⁷Information in this and the following three paragraphs is taken mainly from Eleanor Tupper and George E. McReynolds, *Japan in American Public Opinion*, 437-48. The Macmillan Company.

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The Japanese people resented this law, and some war talk followed, which was played up by jingoes in the United States. However, expressions of opinion in the United States were more often peaceful than belligerent. Before very long, the question of Japanese exclusion became the subject of discussion in Congress, with representatives from the Pacific Coast and the South favoring it and those from the East opposing it, and the representatives from the Middle West dividing on the subject.

During and after the World War, events occurred and new forces developed that aroused public opinion against Japan. The Twenty-One Demands on China brought strong expressions of disapproval, particularly from the eastern part of the United States, as did Japan's retention of Shantung after the war and her foothold on the Island of Yap. The Anglo-Japanese alliance also aroused general apprehension and resentment after the War. Friction continued to increase until the Washington Conference and the resulting Four Power Pact. This conference eased tension between the United States and Japan and brought about harmony on all points except that of immigration. Finally, in 1924, Congress passed a Japanese exclusion bill in spite of the opposition of strong groups of the American people, and in the face of the certainty that such action would arouse deep resentment in Japan.

Since 1924, there have been four sources of friction between the two countries: immigration, the naval issue, the Japanese military invasions of China, and the Japanese assertion of an Asiatic "Monroe Doctrine," which would have the effect of giving them control over the Chinese market.

The sympathy of the American people has been strongly with China as Japan has waged war on that country, but the majority of Americans have been opposed to any action that might involve the United States in war. This sentiment has been ex-

pressed in newspaper editorials, in congressional debates, in public addresses, and in innumerable private conversations. Even the sinking of an American gunboat by the Japanese in Chinese waters in 1937 did not lead to any popular demand for war. Instead, there were pungent demands that the United States get its citizens and its war craft out of the danger zone. *The Philadelphia Record* expressed a common feeling in an editorial on December 14, 1937, when it said that the sinking of the boat was Japan's fault but that the United States was not altogether blameless. "All we did was to send American sailors to and keep American gunboats on the Yangtze River, half a world away in line of Japanese fire. . . . When a blizzard starts, wise men go indoors, in spite of their 'right' to the street." The editorial went on to say that the Americans in Shanghai should be "yanked home by their collars or told to stay at their own risk," and not allowed to involve their country in complications that might lead to war.

Since the World War, American public opinion has been very much opposed to entanglements of any kind that might lead to war. As long as the memory of that war remains, the people will insist that their government go to great lengths to avoid any future conflict. This feeling has led to a popular demand for aloofness from entanglements in Asia almost as strong as the traditional desire for isolation from European political affairs. It can be changed only by a thorough campaign of propaganda extending over a considerable period. Until it is changed, it will serve as a strong brake on any Presidential administration desirous of following a strong policy in the Orient for the protection of American business interests there.

The interest of the United States in what goes on in the region of North and South America is deep and of long standing. Vital strategic interests supplemented by important commer-

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cial interests have led the United States to develop important regional policies in regard to the affairs of this area. These policies fall under three main heads: the Monroe Doctrine, the Caribbean policy, and Pan-Americanism.

The Monroe Doctrine is a key policy in American foreign affairs. This is perhaps the only policy of the United States for which, if violated in an important respect, the country would at once go to war. To the American people, the Monroe Doctrine is almost as sacred as home and mother and the American flag. The average individual has only a hazy idea as to its meaning but he is for it. The story told of a conversation between two citizens is suggestive of this attitude. One is supposed to have said to the other, "What's this I hear about you, that you say you do not believe in the Monroe Doctrine?" The indignant reply was, "It's a lie. I never said I did not believe in the Monroe Doctrine. I do believe in it; it is the palladium of our liberties; I would die for the Monroe Doctrine. All I said was that I do not know what it means."¹⁸

Because the Monroe Doctrine commands popular emotional loyalty, it, like patriotism, is sometimes used as a magic word to further causes only remotely connected with it, and it is sometimes used to cover ulterior economic imperialism. In the original sense, and in the way in which it is now officially interpreted, it is a defensive policy designed to keep European nations from intervening in American affairs in any way that would threaten the strategic interests of the United States. Politicians sometimes read other meanings into it. During the debate over the ratification of the covenant of the League of Nations, some of the isolationists used the Monroe Doctrine to bolster their position. Their contention was that the doc-

¹⁸ George H. Blakeslee, "The Foreign Policy of the United States," in *Interpretations of American Foreign Policy*, edited by Quincy Wright, 17. University of Chicago Press.

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trine would keep the United States out of European affairs as well as keeping Europe out of American affairs. Even the United States Government has stretched the doctrine on occasion, particularly when it desired to justify intervention in Latin American countries for the maintenance or extension of economic control. Public opinion in recent years is inclined to be critical of any interference in the domestic affairs of Latin American countries to further business interests of the United States.

The Caribbean policy of the United States is closely related to, and supplementary to, the Monroe Doctrine. It has grown up since the latter part of the nineteenth century because of the peculiar strategic interest of the United States in the Caribbean region. To a certain extent, it centers around the determination of the United States to control the Panama Canal and the approaches to it. In this region the United States has taken steps to discourage revolutions and has intervened at times to keep favored governments in power. This has been true particularly in Haiti and Nicaragua. Foreign intervention in this area would be looked upon with the greatest disfavor, for this is considered closed territory.

The third policy of the United States in relation to this hemisphere is pan-Americanism. Its purpose is to promote both friendship and business interests through international organization. Although the United States has taken an active interest in inter-American conferences and has generally maintained a policy of promoting peace in this region, such a policy is essentially incompatible with imperialistic interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine or aggressive actions in the Caribbean. Since 1929, there has been a tendency toward increased friendly co-operation with Latin America. This has met with popular support in the United States. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "good neighbor" policy, which gave emphasis to the new

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course of affairs, was received with general satisfaction in his own country and with enthusiasm in Latin America.

The dominant note in the attitude of the masses of the American people toward their country's foreign policy in all regions of the world is a desire for peaceful relations. Ambassador Kennedy said in 1938, "We are careful and wary . . . in the relationships we establish with foreign countries."¹⁹ This attitude springs from a conviction that a policy of wariness is the best way to keep out of trouble. The executive branch of the government is constantly inclined to get ahead of public opinion in protecting the economic interests of American citizens abroad, and is constantly being pulled back by the feeling of a people primarily domestic-minded as it is expressed especially in the United States Senate.

The sources of information are newspapers and magazines. The average man relies mainly on the newspaper for his information, whereas the more highly educated class and those in the upper income brackets may supplement information that they get from newspapers by reading magazine articles dealing with international questions.

Newspaper editors believe there is no great or widespread interest in foreign news, but they know that there is an increasing interest. The average city daily paper prints much more foreign news now than it did in the days before the World War. Economic and political insecurity since the war, along with a widening appreciation of the interdependence of nations and the constant menace of another war, have stimulated popular interest in foreign news. The papers have responded to this growing interest by developing a vast and expensive machinery for gathering news abroad.

The number of magazine articles on international problems has increased correspondingly. A few years ago, a study of

¹⁹ *New York Times*, March 19, 1938.

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articles indexed in the *Readers Guide* revealed that the number of articles on international questions per one thousand indexed more than doubled in the war period. This did not include those written about the war itself. Since the war, the proportionate space given to international subjects has averaged about twice as high as before the war.²⁰ This may be taken as an approximate indication of the extent to which interest in foreign affairs has increased among the more educated portion of the population.

The part played by the press at the peace conference at the close of the World War dramatically illustrated its importance as a news-gathering and news-disseminating agency in the modern world and marked a new period in the conduct of international relations. At the great peace conferences of the past, the diplomats could "sit plotting and playing their high chess-game whereof the pawns are men," in secrecy undisturbed by prying reporters. At Paris, in 1919, the newspaper men swarmed in, demanding to know what was going on. At the height of the conference, some five hundred writers were giving their whole time to sending out information of what was happening, accompanied by comments and criticisms. There were one hundred and fifty correspondents from the United States alone. These men were furnishing the material on which public opinion all over the world was to be based.²¹

The statesmen at the conference might wear the manner of men who are settling the destiny of the world, but behind their imperial dignity and underneath their high silk hats they were deeply concerned about the reports that were being sent

²⁰ Hornell Hart, "Changing Social Attitudes and Interests," *Recent Social Trends in the United States*, 435. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

²¹ The information in this and the following paragraph is from Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, Vol. I, 116, 117. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

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out by the news men and the popular reactions that followed. The statesmen were aware that their power depended upon the will of parliaments and electorates at home. These parliaments and electorates might destroy them at any time because of opinions formed on reports which the journalists were sending out.

Ray Stannard Baker, who was in charge of the press relations of the American delegation at the conference, is of the opinion that President Wilson's failure to take the American newspaper men into his confidence lost him valuable support, support that he badly needed in his campaign to put across the Treaty and the League Covenant in the United States. Wilson fought for more publicity of conference proceedings than the other delegates were willing to agree to, but he did not tell the correspondents what a strenuous battle he had waged for the thing they were demanding, either then or later.²² Although a more favorable press might not have been enough to enable the President to win his cause in the United States, Mr. Baker's estimate of the importance of good newspaper contacts is not an exaggerated one. In the field of international relations, newspapers are considerably more important in building opinions than in the field of domestic affairs because they more nearly have a monopoly on foreign news.

In gathering news abroad, the newspapers work under certain handicaps that make it difficult for them to get accurate information on all that is happening. One difficulty originally was the lack of adequately trained reporters. This was notably true in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference. Many of the American correspondents sent over to write on exceedingly complicated questions could speak no language but English and

²² Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, Vol. I, 151. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

had no very broad background of knowledge on international affairs.²³ Since that time, this difficulty has largely been done away with. The press associations and the great newspapers that maintain foreign staffs have developed a force of trained men, some of whom may be ranked among the best-informed persons on international affairs in the world.

Other difficulties have to do with the sources of news. A few of the wealthiest newspapers, such as *The New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune*, maintain their own staffs of correspondents abroad. Other papers depend upon press associations for foreign news. Of these, the Associated Press and United Press are the most far-reaching in their coverage. The staffs of these American agencies are extensive and they do a competent job of reporting. However, for economic reasons (and in some countries, for political reasons), such agencies must depend upon foreign news associations and newspapers for considerable routine news coverage. These foreign sources of news are not always reliable in the dictator-governed countries where the press is rigidly controlled and its primary function is considered to be a propagandist one. American news agencies overcome this as far as possible by editing and checking reports from such sources, and they depend upon their own correspondents to cover leading events.

Various methods are used in the countries of the dictators to prevent the exportation of news. Direct censorship is one method. Then, occasionally correspondents are threatened with physical violence or actually suffer such treatment. Sometimes they are expelled. Perhaps most effective of all is the method of drying up the source of news—a method developed in Germany and in Russia. This consists in making it highly dangerous for anyone in the country, except the official spokes-

²³ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, Vol. I, 129. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

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man, to give out information. For a number of reasons, a correspondent finds his path strewn with difficulties if he does not co-operate with the government in these countries and use the official sources of information. Nevertheless, it is possible to find the facts and get them out. Subterranean channels of information exist that cannot be completely closed. A forceful reporter backed by a powerful newspaper or press association with international prestige can sometimes write with surprising frankness.²⁴

After the reports are all in, the way in which a paper treats the news may have an important effect on public opinion. Governments have been known to bring pressure on editorial offices for favorable treatment. On at least one occasion, the government of Nazi Germany threatened to withdraw all advertising by German firms from *The New York Times* because of the dispatches from Germany which the *Times* was printing. They were told to go ahead.²⁵ Such a threat would nearly always prove futile if made to a powerful newspaper or to the great press associations.

The chief fault to be found with newspaper treatment of foreign news is the tendency toward sensationalism. Among the better papers, it may be manifested in exaggerated emphasis in the headlines. In the body of the news columns, less sensational news may be omitted or cut down while undue emphasis is placed on dramatic happenings. In the yellow press, sensationalism may take the form of abuse of foreign powers and treatment designed to appeal to various economic and racial prejudices held by prospective readers. The explanation of the journalistic tendency to sensationalize foreign news is to be found in reader interest. Foreign news must com-

²⁴ O. W. Riegel, "How to Read Foreign News," *Seventh Yearbook National Council for Social Studies* (1937), 48.

²⁵ *Propaganda, How to Recognize It and Deal With It*, 67. Institute for Propaganda Analysis, Inc.

pete for the attention of the reader with domestic happenings that touch his self-interest much more intimately. Foreign news must be sensational to hold his attention.

The treatment of foreign news varies widely in different papers. At the beginning of Robert W. Desmond's book, *The Press and World Affairs*, is a picture of *The Times* of London, *La Prensa* of Buenos Aires, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *The New York Times*, accompanied by the statement that, although there are other fine newspapers in the world, there are none better than these. The explanation continues that in these papers public affairs receive balanced treatment with a high degree of impartiality. Discussing other papers, Mr. Desmond says, "The Hearst papers and the *Chicago Tribune* are notably provincial and chauvinistic," while the Scripps-Howard papers strike a happy medium in the matter of nationalism or internationalism.²⁶ The space given to foreign news is considerably greater in *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, the *Herald Tribune*, and the *Chicago Tribune* than in the average American newspaper, and, since these newspapers maintain their own foreign services, the treatment is perhaps more individualistic. Other newspapers depend generally on the press associations for foreign news, and their treatment shows its individuality, aside from editorial comment, mainly in what is printed and what is left out and in the nature of the headlines.

The manner in which newspapers discover and report the facts concerning foreign relations is a very important factor affecting public opinion, as we have seen, but it is not the only one. Various other forces operate to influence opinion in this field, sometimes by influencing what goes into the papers, sometimes by using other avenues of approach to the public mind.

²⁶ Robert W. Desmond, *The Press and World Affairs*, 323. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc.

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The executive branch of the government itself is vitally concerned with public opinion on foreign affairs. American Presidents and secretaries of state have traditionally taken the initiative in the field of foreign relations. The Monroe Doctrine and its subsequent interpretations came from the executive, as did the "good neighbor" policy and other significant positive steps in international relations. Whether the President and his secretary of state act as a result of outside pressure or on their own initiative, they find it necessary to gain and hold both legislative and popular support for their policies.

Information, and sometimes propaganda, on foreign affairs is given out by the government in a variety of ways. The publication by the State Department of official documents, such as treaties, furnishes a factual basis for the formation of opinion. Official utterances by the President, secretary of state, or other high ranking officials may define American policy and furnish the basis for the crystallization of opinion. Perhaps of most importance in the day-by-day formation of opinion are the releases to the press. The State Department has a Chief of the Division of Current Information and an Assistant Chief whose annual salaries are between six and seven thousand dollars each. These men are engaged mostly in gathering, writing, or editing material for distribution to the press.²⁷ They are the government's publicity agents on foreign relations and they are the channel through which a large part of the information in that field reaches the public. In addition, the President and the secretary of state hold frequent press conferences, at which they talk directly with the newspaper correspondents. The President and other high ranking officials may also address the public directly either at public gatherings or by radio. The President has great prestige, and what he says carries weight. It makes the front page of the newspapers and brings a large audience

²⁷ Senate Report 1275, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 550.

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when he speaks either by radio or directly to the people. The administration is thus in a strong position to mobilize opinion.

American legislators, particularly senators, may also take an active part in shaping public opinion. Because of their check on the treaty-making power of the President, the Senate is in a powerful position and the senators are quite conscious of their power. As Arthur Krock wrote in *The New York Times* of March 8, 1938, "Responsible to the Senate, and otherwise checked by the process of American democracy, those who conduct our foreign policy are always in hot water, always required to tread on eggs. . . . Foreign Chancellories hesitate to base any policy on what the American Executive favors, having good reason to believe that public opinion will have been ranged against it by the time the policy has been prepared." Such professional isolationists as Senators Borah and Johnson have more than once undermined Presidential policies. Senators, without the experience or responsibility of actually conducting foreign relations, are inclined to be more isolationist than the executive. They sometimes act as though they thought the United States should get everything and give nothing in its dealings with other countries. On such a stand, they are in a position to win powerful support from the voters back home. They have the natural prejudices of their constituents on their side and, with that advantage, not infrequently prove more powerful than the President when they contest with him for the favor of public opinion.

Various pressure groups representing private interests are also constantly trying to influence public opinion on foreign relations. Among the most active of such groups are those that are working in one way or another to influence opinion for peace. A student of activity in this field wrote in 1937 that there were fifty national patriotic organizations, twenty-seven national peace organizations, forty-three organizations with

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active peace committees, forty-three organizations whose activities increase international understanding, and many local patriotic and peace committees actively at work trying to influence opinions on peace.²⁸

These organizations were divided into five groups: (1) those emphasizing the desirability of preparedness, such as the veterans' and patriotic organizations; (2) those emphasizing the need for a stronger League of Nations to prevent war through collective action, such as the League of Nations Association; (3) those urging the adoption of a strict program of "neutrality" to keep the United States out of war, such as the National Council for the Prevention of War and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; (4) those favoring absolute pacifism and refusal to participate in any war, such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the War Resisters League; (5) those favoring the replacement of the capitalist system by a socialist system of production for use rather than for profit, such as the League for Industrial Democracy.

Various techniques were used to influence and mobilize opinion. Some organizations stressed educational programs, which might include the publication and distribution of books, pamphlets, and magazine articles on various phases of international relations, the promotion of study groups and forums, and mass education through peace advertisements and newspaper publicity. Other organizations encouraged the nomination and election of congressmen with a favorable viewpoint, and urged the voters to make their influence felt by writing letters and sending telegrams to congressmen after they were elected. On occasion, mass meetings were held, spectacular demonstrations arranged, and petitions circulated nationally to influence action

²⁸ Elton Atwater, "Organizing American Public Opinion for Peace," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. I (April, 1937), 112. Material in the following paragraphs is from this article, 112-15.

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on particular issues. Different channels of communication, such as the press, radio, and motion pictures, were used as they proved suitable to any particular technique, and in proportion to the amount of money which the sponsoring organization had to spend.

The munitions makers, who are vitally interested in matters of peace and war, have also been active. In 1929, Mr. William B. Shearer, most notorious of the agents of the ship builders, wrote, "... I carried on a consistent campaign of publicity throughout the Nation and every Member of Congress, instructing patriotic societies, making speeches, and mailing publicity to every section of the United States." Mr. Shearer was favoring a big navy, fighting the pacifists and the "internationalists," and opposing the World Court. He wrote, "It is true that I have been ruthless and relentless and if, at times, I struck below the belt it was because the fight became unfair and at times I was combating treason as well as un-Americanism." Mr. Shearer classified all those who opposed him as "internationalists and pacifists."²⁹ The work of such paid advocates of preparedness as Mr. Shearer is probably most effective in influencing public opinion when it reaches the public indirectly through sympathetic newspapers, such as the Hearst press, and through the patriotic organizations.

The pressure groups of various economic interests make their influence felt from time to time as they find themselves affected by foreign policies. This has been very noticeable in connection with the relations of the United States with Japan. The labor unions have opposed Oriental immigration, and when Japan was invading China in 1937-8 they were among the first to condemn her and to support a boycott of Japanese goods. American textile manufacturers have favored increasingly higher tariffs on Japanese products to protect themselves against

²⁹ *Munitions Industry*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Part 21, 6079-86.

competition. In 1937, the threat of Japanese exploitation of salmon and halibut beds off the Alaskan coast led to strong protests from fishermen in Oregon, Washington, and California. And in the case of American rivalry with Japan in China, a number of different economic groups have stakes involved and exert their influence according to their interests.

Similarly, the act providing for eventual independence of the Philippine Islands passed in 1933 was the result of economic forces. Although the question of Philippine independence may be, strictly speaking, an imperial problem rather than one of international relations, it is closely related to the foreign policy of the United States, particularly in the Far East. The Filipinos have been wanting independence for years on emotional and patriotic grounds, but the question was settled in the United States almost wholly on an economic basis. American investors in the Philippines and exporting interests, as well as Americans living in Asia and the military forces, were opposed to granting independence. In favor of granting independence were the American Federation of Labor and strong agricultural groups, including the National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Co-operative Milk Producers' Association, and various Cottonseed Crushers' Associations.³⁰ The forces favoring independence proved much stronger than the opponents, with the result that the Hawes-Cutting Act, providing for independence, was passed by overwhelming majorities in both houses of Congress.

Foreign policy in a democracy, particularly in the United States, responds to public opinion. Economic self-interest is generally what determines a nation's foreign policies. The American people as has previously been indicated are not always in agreement as to what constitutes their national interest, and

³⁰ Benjamin H. Williams, *American Diplomacy*, 156-9. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

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their government sometimes follows a course that seems to many groups to be unwise. The people of the United States are also inclined to be idealistic in their attitudes. They may act for self-interest but they like to justify themselves on high moral grounds. The regional policies of the United States have been developed as a result of these forces. Among the factors that play an important part in influencing public opinion are the newspapers, magazines, government officials concerned with foreign policy, and various pressure groups.

Basically, of course, the attitudes of a people from which spring their day-to-day opinions on foreign affairs are formed very early in life. Assistant Secretary of State Francis B. Sayre declared in 1938 that "the fundamental set-up of American foreign policy" came not from statesmen or politicians at Washington but "from millions of American homes, from country villages, from city slums, from farms and ranches, from Southern log cabins and Western mining camps."³¹ Another student of foreign affairs has suggested that if we are going to influence the forces shaping international relations, "we must go to the primary school teacher, the professor of history, the newspaper editor and correspondent, the film director and the popularizer of certain ideas concerning the nature and function of the state."³² The American government follows the will of its people in foreign relations, and the people's ideas are a result of the forces that operate to shape their attitudes and opinions from childhood through maturity.

³¹ *New York Times*, June 7, 1938.

³² "The Modern Diplomat," by H., *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. XV (1937), 513.

XXIII

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

MANY years ago, Aristotle wrote that "the educational system must always be relative to the particular polity, as it is the character proper to each polity which is its habitual preservative." The dictators of our time have installed an educational system that is designed to preserve their polity. It may be described in the words of a well-known newspaper correspondent, who wrote, "Italy is one vast, full-time school in which every boy and girl, from infancy to maturity, is taught one lesson: 'To believe, to obey, to fight'."¹ That is the pattern for education in all the dictator-governed countries. There is no correspondingly simple pattern in the democracies, but the question of what kind of education will best serve as a preservative of the democratic way of life is a very important one. At a time when militant and virile dictatorships are on the march, the continued existence of democracy may depend upon the successful answer to that question.

In a country where the people rule, the intelligence, character, and alertness of individual citizens is all important. They must be fitted for something other than being obedient followers. They must have a capacity for the use of discriminative judgment on public questions. They must have character that will cause them to make decisions for the common good. And since liberty is maintained only at the price of eternal vigilance, they must be alert to defend ideals that they consider good.

Education for citizenship begins for the child at home and is

¹ Anne O'Hare McCormick, *New York Times Magazine*, May 17, 1936, 25.

continued in the school and the church. For the adult, the process is carried on by newspapers, radio, and public speeches. Throughout the whole process, we need constantly to remember that rulers of the state are being educated. Civilization now is very complex, and thus far political and social developments have not kept pace with mechanical progress. The wisdom of the people sometimes seems inadequate in the face of difficult problems of great common concern, but whether adequate or not, their opinions govern in a democracy. 'The business of those concerned with education for citizenship is to see that the reasoning power and the character of the people are so developed as to give assurance that their opinions will be reasonable.

Whatever may be said of the other agencies of civic education, educators are in wide disagreement as to whether or not the schools should be used consciously for the indoctrination of their pupils with the principles of some particular political and economic system. As a matter of fact, education always has been used for indoctrination. When controlled by the church, it was used for the inculcation of orthodox religious views; when controlled by the state, for the development of patriotism and loyalty to the *status quo*. To the extent that the schools are used in this manner, they are instrumentalities of propaganda for the creed or the system that the ruling power is interested in maintaining.

In modern times, the new regimes have made the most vigorous use of their educational systems for civic training. This is natural, since they wish to make permanent the new order that they have introduced. In Italy, Germany, and Russia, the schools frankly serve as propaganda agencies for the development of attitudes favorable to the regime in power. The work of propaganda begins when the child is very young and pervades the whole of his education. Everything is subor-

minated to this, for nothing else is considered as important as the development of the desired loyalties. The goal is an Italy in which all are 100 per cent Fascists, a Germany of 100 per cent Nazis, and a Russia of 100 per cent Communists, with each individual ready to live or die without question for his country and the only true faith. They would go into battle like the ancient hordes of Islam, shouting, "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet."

The countries with long-established political systems are less militant and egregious than the totalitarian states in their use of education for propaganda purposes, and they do not subordinate all else to it, but they too use the schools for indoctrination. In France, the schools give much attention to the history of the French people, with emphasis on their wars and victories and national heroes and on French ideals. Relatively little attention is paid to the characteristics of the other countries in the world. An imposing picture of their country is presented to children when they are at an impressionable age. In England, too, the schools use history for indoctrination, with emphasis placed on English characteristics and English heroes, although there is no nationally controlled school system as in France. However, the traditions and patterns of conduct handed down by schools and school life are relied upon even more than the teaching of particular subjects to shape the character and attitudes of England's future rulers.

American schools have been used extensively as agencies for the development of attitudes favorable to the existing order in the United States. History and civics and literature, along with the ritual of patriotism, have furnished the channels for indoctrination. Emphasis on national heroes in history and on the work of English-speaking writers in literature have given pupils Americanized viewpoints. Since each state in the United States has its own educational system, the methods used have

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varied somewhat in different localities. Some states have passed laws that prohibit teaching derogatory to national heroes. There is good precedent for such legislation. Plato, in the system of education outlined in his *Republic*, was emphatic in saying that nothing derogatory to the gods or to the national heroes should be taught the young. Some American states have also made compulsory the teaching of courses on the Constitution or on American principles of government. A great many have passed laws requiring teachers to swear allegiance to the Constitution as a means of protecting pupils from unpatriotic teaching. "In general the method has been as elsewhere that of uncritical indoctrination rather than of critical analysis and constructive synthesis."²

The existing economic system has been guarded even more zealously than existing political institutions. For instance, a teacher who taught communism in the public schools would be much more likely to lose his job than one who advocated the establishment of a unicameral legislature or a parliamentary government or even a monarchy. But the capitalistic system and patriotism are supposed to be inextricably interwoven in the minds of the pupils. Since patriotism lends itself to idealistic emotional appeals more readily than capitalism, the emotional appeal of the one may be brought to the defense of the other by those who seek to maintain the *status quo*.

Now come educators who dream of a better world and a more humane society to tell us that the schools should be used to indoctrinate pupils with ideals that will make them work for a new order. The schools, they tell us, should not serve as defenders of the manifestly imperfect order which exists, neither should they remain neutral in the face of controversial

² Charles Edward Merriam, *The Making of Citizens*, 93. University of Chicago Press.

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questions. They should lead the way to the establishment of better conditions.

Professor George S. Counts, of Columbia University, one of the leading advocates of indoctrination with progressive ideas, in his stimulating little book, *Dare the School Build A New Social Order?* asserts that the schools are not now leading toward a better social order. They are controlled by conservative forces and are acting as agencies for the perpetuation of "ideas and institutions suited to an age that is gone." Only rarely do they "wage war on behalf of principle or ideal."³

Professor Counts and the other advanced advocates of indoctrination contend that teachers must shake themselves loose from their traditionally conservative position and be prepared to deal realistically and positively with social issues. They must assume leadership. This will probably mean that they will be criticized and misrepresented and that their security will be endangered. These are the costs of leadership. "Society is never redeemed without effort, struggle, and sacrifice."

Dr. Counts says that the schools should work for the realization of the democratic ideal. As he sees it, society fashioned in harmony with this ideal would combat the forces tending toward social and class distinctions; destroy economic parasitism; "manifest a tender regard for the weak, the ignorant, and the unfortunate;" exalt labor and provide adequate rewards for all useful work; strive for equality of opportunity among all races and classes of men; consider paramount the interests of the masses of the people and direct the powers of government toward the enrichment of the life of the common man.

The schools cannot be impartial, we are told. Teachers who attempt neutrality dedicate themselves either to futility or to a

³ This paragraph and the three following are based on George S. Counts, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* John Day Company, Inc.

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position that actually supports the conservatives. In emphasis and in selection of material, the schools "must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas." Teachers should throw off what H. G. Wells called the "ancient servility of the pedagogue," and "deliberately reach for power." Their obligation is to further the interests of the great masses of the people. They must face issues squarely and give their pupils a vision of the possibilities of a better order and develop in them loyalties that will lead toward the realization of the vision. This does not involve any deliberate distortion or suppression of the facts to support a particular point of view, but it does call for aggressive and intelligent leadership toward a definite goal.

Not all of the advocates of indoctrination in progressive principles are in agreement as to what should be indoctrinated. Professor Daniel Prescott told a meeting of the National Education Association in 1938 that two political attitudes must be held in common by all the citizens in a democracy. "The first is faith in and loyalty to the democratic process itself. The second is willingness to abide by and act in harmony with the will of the majority once a vote is taken." And he went on to say, "These are the only political attitudes with which our children need to be indoctrinated consciously, emotionally and endlessly; but it certainly is not safe longer to neglect a forthright, articulate inculcation of these two attitudes." With open channels of communication, he felt that propaganda from abroad and from special interest groups at home was so effective that counter propaganda for democracy was necessary if democracy was not to be lost through the development of attitudes in young people that would no longer include belief in democracy.⁴

As a practical matter, any teacher who aspires to use the public schools as a medium for radical indoctrination is likely to have a difficult time unless he uses insidious methods. The

⁴*New York Times*, June 29, 1938.

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teaching of communism, for instance, is about as unpopular in the United States as the teaching of capitalistic ideas would be in Russia. Teachers are notoriously hesitant to lead in movements that are opposed by the men who control the schools. If we are to have indoctrination, it is more likely to be the kind desired by the predominantly conservative school boards and college trustees than the kind advocated by the progressives. Once we admit the legitimacy of indoctrination in the educational process, we open the way for a race between conservative indoctrinators and progressive indoctrinators, with the odds heavily in favor of the conservatives.

In searching for a program of education most suited to democracy, we may agree with the progressive advocates of indoctrination that the schools should not lead their pupils to believe that the existing order, or Constitution, or any social, economic, or political institution, is too sacred to be changed. Neither should the schools avoid the frank and honest and free discussion of controversial issues. But we may well question the desirability of a crusading indoctrination in any particular ideology, whether it be that of democracy, socialism, communism, or fascism. It may be that there is a better way to reach the goal we seek.

We need, in the first place to re-examine the fundamental purposes of education. Epictetus went to the heart of the matter when he said in ancient Rome, "The rulers of the state have said that only free men shall be educated, but God has said that only educated men shall be free." The first purpose of education in the real sense is to make men free. This it does by liberating them from superstition and the bonds of ignorance, by teaching them how to search critically for the truth, and by giving them access to a wide range of knowledge. Such education is to be avoided as though it were a deadly plague in a country whose institutions cannot stand the light of reason or

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the free play of criticism. But a democracy depends for its existence upon an intelligent citizenry. It is founded on the assumption that the unfettered will of the people is to prevail, on faith in human reason, and on the assumption that free criticism is desirable. For a democracy, no better system of education can be devised than one that aims to make its pupils free and critical and sophisticated in social and economic and political thinking.

Education should be a process of training in the technique of searching for the truth. So far as social problems are concerned, this would imply that such hostile philosophies as fascism, communism, democracy, and all the subsidiary questions of controversy should be examined honestly and thoroughly. To conservatives, such a suggestion is repugnant because they are afraid that education of this kind will turn out a few communists. They prefer to keep blinders on their children until they are safely past the impressionable age. However, if we assume, as most Americans do, that democracy is the way for us, the truth is that we can build its foundations most solidly not on ignorance but on knowledge.

Teach a child that there are certain bad mysterious "isms" that are wholly evil, or perhaps not to be discussed, and there is always the possibility that he may some day get the other side of the story by reading a book or hearing a speech or talking to a radical. His experience may parallel that of a child from a religiously fundamentalist home who goes to high school or college, hears about the theory of evolution, and loses his religion completely. It will be safer to let him find out all about the systems that are advanced for the redemption of mankind, and think about them, and discuss them in the atmosphere of the classroom. Then he will know all the answers when demagogues and charlatans come around with salvation on a silver platter. Give him all the facts that can be found, both good and

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bad, about communism, fascism, or any other system that may arise. Democracy will not suffer by comparison.

Common sense indicates that political theory will not be taught in the first grades any more than biology or geology or trigonometry are taught there. Educators will decide what subjects can be taught most profitably at each level. We may assume, however, that nothing false, nothing contrary to the spirit of truth, should be taught at any level. From the first grade and on through the graduate school, educators should encourage the spirit of inquiry and the search for truth. National heroes should not be pictured as gods, but as the very human and able leaders that they were. The United States should not be described as an island of virtue in a sea of international villainy.

In a program of education designed to deal honestly and fearlessly with controversial issues, the question of the teacher's position is likely to be raised at the outset. Should he be as objective as possible in the classroom or should he take sides? Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn has contended ably that the teacher should let his pupils know where he stands on controversial questions.⁵ This might at first glance seem to imply that he is to be a propagandist trying to "put something over" on defenseless children. Dr. Meiklejohn emphatically repudiates this idea. As he sees it, the teacher must be thinking about current problems and coming to conclusions on them. If he is to lead, "he must be going somewhere." However, he must not be allowed to propagandize either for the "Right" or the "Left." "The primary intention of the schools of a democracy is the development of the power, the capacity, of the student to judge upon such matters as Capitalism and Communism. And the fundamental sin of the propagandist is that he weakens the

⁵ Alexander Meiklejohn, "Teachers and Controversial Questions," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVII (1938), 15-22.

mind of his victim rather than strengthens it." Education on Dr. Meiklejohn's pattern would come perilously close to being propaganda if all the teachers believed in the same doctrines. To the end that such a one-sided result may not be obtained, he declares that school authorities have a duty to see that pupils are given an opportunity to hear both sides of fundamental issues presented by teachers who believe in them.

He describes teaching as the initiation of pupils into a fellowship devoted to the art of "creating and using intelligence for the improving of human living." The pupil learns by contact with a master through a process of joint activity. In a well-conducted classroom, "it quickly becomes apparent that the conclusions reached by the teacher are not of very great importance." The teacher leads and inspires his pupils in the art of making judgments in order that they may be fit for membership in a free society. "To that end, the teacher must advocate. He must show what he wishes to be done by doing it." Because the important thing is the process of judgment-making, he will prize disagreement from his pupils at least as highly as agreement.

So long as we accept the idea that education should develop critical and accurate thinking, it is perhaps a matter of secondary importance whether we accept the Meiklejohn theory that the teacher should take sides or hold to the position that he should deal with controversial questions as objectively as possible. There may be some doubt as to how well a teacher who follows the Meiklejohn pattern will succeed in developing independent thinking in his pupils rather than simply influencing them to accept his own viewpoint. Certainly the method seems unlikely to realize its aims unless we do not neglect to follow the recommendation that pupils be exposed to the beliefs of teachers holding different views. But these are details of technique that should be experimented with in order that

we may find out more accurately how the theory works in practice.

Thus far we have considered the work of education as it has to do with the development of intelligence through the training of the mind, but intelligence alone is not enough. Students of politics have long recognized that character is at least equally important. A distinguished scholar has said that recognition of the "overwhelming importance of character and public opinion" is the chief thing that "distinguishes the great writers on politics from the petty ones."⁶ Unless knowledge is coupled with character and ideals, it will be used by the individual solely as a tool for his own advancement.

The world has seen the governing class of a great democracy, heirs by birth and training to the leadership of their people, willing to sacrifice the welfare of their country when they were afraid that the economic interests of their own class were threatened. When such a situation arises, it marks the failure of the agencies that shape personality to develop the sense of social responsibility that is a quality of individuals necessary for the survival of democracy.

In *The Republic*, Plato has Socrates say:

And a man will be most careful of that which he loves? . . . And assuredly he will love that most whose interests he regards as identical with his own, and in whose prosperity or adversity he believes his own fortunes to be involved. . . . Then we must select from the whole body of guardians those individuals who appear to us, after due observation, to be remarkable above others for the zeal with which, through their whole life, they have done what they have thought advantageous to the state, and inflexibly refused to do what they thought the reverse.

Democracy is much more than a form of government. It is a way of life that stresses the sacredness of human personality

⁶ Arthur Twining Hadley, *The Education of the American Citizen*, 139. Yale University Press.

and aims at equality of opportunity for all its members. The ideal will be realized only to the extent that the individuals whose attitudes form the basis of public opinion are sensitive to the needs of all who compose the state. It will never be wholly realized until the individual citizen is as solicitous for his neighbor's welfare as for his own. Even the forms of democracy will be destroyed if we lag too far behind this ideal.

The natural tendency of the individual is to think first in selfish terms. If someone injures me, I react to defend myself. Very early in the life of the child this feeling is broadened to include members of his immediate household. If someone injures my mother, he hurts me. To a lesser degree, the feeling will be extended to include intimate friends. Sometimes it stops there. Unless this feeling can be extended to cover many more people, democracy is not likely to be realized completely. The mistreatment of sweat-shop laborers or sharecroppers or the exploitation of any other helpless class must hurt me keenly and lead me to act for the alleviation of such conditions if I am to play my part in making democracy work.

The development of the democratic attitude calls for character training by the agencies that lay the foundations of public opinion. In an earlier period, such fundamental traits of character were mainly the product of the home, with the influence of religion often a significant factor. In more recent years, they have come increasingly within the province of the schools, but the schools are still in a transitional period and not yet prepared to do the job as effectively as it should be done. They may, perhaps, learn a lesson from the home, where character has been shaped not nearly as much by formal instruction as by constant association of the child in the common activities of life with the father and mother and other members of the family.

The teacher occupies a position of great strategic importance in the educational system. If he is a master of the art of teach-

ing, his personality and his character will overshadow all the textbook material and the formal processes of the classroom. It follows that those who select teachers should themselves have an enlightened conception of the characteristics that mark the good teacher and should exercise the utmost care in their selections. In the first place, the teacher should be an educated person himself. He should have a broad background of knowledge, a passion for the truth, and a wide human sympathy. He should be capable of inspiring his pupils with a thirst for knowledge and of helping to develop in them the democratic viewpoint. He should have resources of courage and character that would command respect in any circle. Such is the ideal. Not many teachers will approach very closely to it, but this is the type school boards and university authorities should seek to discover. This is the pattern teachers should seek to follow.

The schools are sometimes sharply criticized for their failure to provide the right kind of civic training. They are judged by the fruits of their efforts, and the fruits are not always satisfactory. Toward the close of the first administration of Mayor La Guardia, the associate superintendent of schools in New York City declared that the La Guardia administration was "the most socially-minded one we have ever had, and yet there is a chance that the Mayor may not be re-elected." The reason given for this apprehension was that too many New Yorkers voted to further their own immediate private interests rather than the general welfare. Enough voters to swing the election were high school graduates. The schools were to blame, the superintendent declared, for the many selfish citizens who placed their own welfare above that of society.⁷

Similarly, Dr. Frank Kingdon, speaking to the National Education Association in 1938, referred to Jersey City's Mayor Hague as a symptom that something was profoundly wrong

⁷ *New York Times*, May 9, 1937.

with the country. The mayor had been re-elected term after term by people who had come out of American schools. "Educators should not waste time denouncing Hague;" said Dr. Kingdon, "they should examine themselves, realizing that the school system makes such men as Hague possible."⁸

The schools have failed to develop either discriminating judgment or individual character in the desired degree. They have taught civics and sociology and economics and all manner of studies intended to fill the minds of pupils with social facts and inform them about political mechanisms. Such subjects, as ordinarily taught, President Arthur Twining Hadley asserted a number of years ago, did more harm than good because they exaggerated an already existing tendency to lay stress "on institutions rather than on character as a means of social salvation." It was his conviction that the remedy for political evils lay in "the creation of a sound public sentiment."⁹ Although we may not agree with the contention that the teaching of such subjects has done more harm than good, we may reasonably accept the view that their achievements have fallen far short of what should have been accomplished.

In fact, the formal teaching of any subject seems to have practically no influence upon the character of the pupils. They are affected more by experience with life situations followed by discussion. Problems of community living may be made vivid by first-hand contact with them. A field trip may reveal the conditions of poverty on "the other side of the tracks." Information may be gathered about disease or malnutrition in the community. For instance, if the school is in a region where malaria is common, the pupils may investigate the local extent of this disease and be led to an understanding of its evil phys-

⁸ *New York Times*, June 30, 1938.

⁹ Arthur Twining Hadley, *The Education of the American Citizen*, 136. Yale University Press.

ical and economic results and to the discovery that it could be eradicated with comparative ease if people were willing to spend the necessary money and take the trouble to see that the job was done. Pupils may also be allowed to operate such projects as a school cafeteria co-operatively and be made aware of the social significance of such a venture. On the playing field and in club and dramatic activities, they may learn principles of sportsmanship and co-operation. The standards of the group are an important influence on the individual. Education that puts students into first-hand contact with social facts, and makes them think about the problems involved, and tends to draw out their best moral reactions is the kind of education which actually shapes character.

The English public schools, which are privately controlled, have been notably successful in character building. The Duke of Wellington is supposed to have said that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing field of Eton. In more detail, a commission that reported on the public schools in 1861 said, "It is not easy to estimate the degree in which the English people are indebted to these schools for the qualities on which they pique themselves most—for their capacity to govern others and control themselves, for aptitude for combining freedom with order, their public spirit, their vigor and manliness of character, their strong, but not slavish respect for public opinion, their love of healthy sports and exercise. . . . And they have had perhaps the largest share in moulding the character of an English gentleman."¹⁰ Although the English public schools have turned out a product that cannot be regarded as the ideal type for a democracy, they have shown a power to develop character that demonstrates what can be done.

One of the main reasons why education has not developed the

¹⁰ Quoted in John Merriman Gaus, *Great Britain A Study of Civic Loyalty*, 148, 149. University of Chicago Press.

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right kind of citizens lies in the failure of the teachers to come to grips with practical problems in the classroom. Some years ago, when the Tammany machine ruled New York City, it was pointed out that the school children of the city could not find out anything about Tammany from their civics textbook. The extra-legal power in the saddle was perhaps the most important feature of the city's government, but a child could go through the public schools, pass his course in city civics with honor, and never hear of it. If a social science course is to accomplish any very useful purpose, it must get at vital facts and the forces that make the wheels go 'round and stimulate thought about them.

When the individual leaves school, he should be prepared to play an intelligent part in the life of the democracy of which he is a part. Because he will be tugged at on every side by forces of propaganda that will try to influence him in one way or another, generally for selfish purposes, he should be prepared to resist such pressure. Education should make him aware of the devices of propaganda and of his own weaknesses. It should give him an understanding of the role that propaganda plays in modern life. If the schools will turn out citizens who have learned to be skeptical of vague statements, to challenge unsupported assertions, to distinguish between propaganda and unbiased evidence, and to be generally wary of the wiles of the propagandist, the tricks of propaganda will lose much of their effectiveness.

Since newspapers constitute one of the main channels of public information in the modern world, and they are very frequently used for propaganda purposes, the pupils in the schools should be given very practical training, by the case method, in reading newspapers. They should be taught to distinguish between ordinarily reliable papers and generally unreliable ones, and to make reasonable allowances for what appears in any of them. Pupils can also be taught to look for the place from

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which a news dispatch was sent, the name of the correspondent, and the name of the press service. They can be made aware of the various kinds of censorship and news distortion. They can learn to check newspapers with one another and to check information gained from the newspapers with that obtained from other sources.

Institutions and conditions in the world are constantly changing. Education cannot fit men for life in a static society as a factory turns out standardized bolts to fit into a particular machine. Its function is to give them a way of thinking and feeling that will enable them to approach new problems in useful fashion, to equip them to choose between competing leaders and competing philosophies without being swept into unwise action by the propaganda of special interests. In the political realm, this means that constitutions and the machinery of government will be adapted progressively to the needs of changing times by men whose opinions are the result neither of a spirit of ancestor worship nor of a desire for change brought about by the emotional appeals of pressure groups.

Carlyle wrote in *Sartor Resartus*, "But man is, and was always, a blockhead and dullard; much readier to feel and digest, than to think and consider. Prejudice, which he pretends to hate, is his absolute lawgiver; mere use-and-wont everywhere leads him by the nose. . . ." Education is based on the theory that man can be something more than this. It proceeds upon the assumption that he is capable of making intelligent judgments. Its purpose is to give training that will increase the likelihood of the triumph of reason when reason and prejudice compete for the domination of the individual's mind.

In order that the schools may accomplish their purpose, they must be kept clear of pressure exerted by outside groups interested in the development of biased attitudes. This means nothing less than that educators must be allowed to search for the

truth and make known their conclusions in their respective fields with complete academic freedom. The schools cannot educate men if the teachers themselves are not free.

Every nation, whether it be governed by a dictatorship or a democracy, depends for its strength in the last analysis on the quality of its people. Modern dictatorships have created efficient school systems to make of their citizens the disciplined and loyal followers that are deemed necessary for the continuance of such a regime. An educational system suited to a democracy exists to make men free. The world witnesses a conflict between the ideologies of the two systems. It is the old conflict between the ideals of Sparta and those of Athens. Pericles is supposed to have said in his classic oration at a funeral of soldiers who had fallen in war, after calling attention to the democracy of the Athenian political system:

. . . . For we are the only people who think him that does not meddle in state affairs,—not indolent, but good for nothing. And yet we pass the soundest judgments, and are quick at catching the right apprehensions of things, not thinking that words are prejudicial to actions, but rather the not being duly prepared by previous debate before we are obliged to proceed to execution. Herein consists our distinguishing excellence, that in the hour of action we show the greatest courage, and yet debate beforehand the expediency of our measures. The courage of others is the result of ignorance; deliberation makes them cowards.

In the long run, a system based on the support of free men must prove superior to any other.

XXIV

DEMOCRACY CHALLENGED

THE ideals of democracy and of dictatorship are in irreconcilable conflict. To those who believe in the democratic way of life, the greatest tragedy of this age is the retreat of popular government before fascism. For more than a hundred years, the modern world has seemed to be advancing toward increased democracy, and now with shocking suddenness, since the World War, the current has changed and the retreat toward a primitive ideal of dictatorship camouflaged by modern trappings has set in. This retreat has not been forced upon peoples powerless to stop it. It represents the will of peoples who have turned their backs on democracy, despairing of its ability to bring them what they want in life. The choice between democracy and dictatorship is a choice that the people make.

The government and the political institutions of all countries rest ultimately upon the basis of popular consent. Neither a dictatorship nor a democracy can long survive against the opposition of a majority of its people. Dictators wield enormous power without formal restraint from authoritative representatives of the popular will, but dictators do not try to defy the opinion of the people; they try to control it. Mussolini, who sometimes expresses contempt for public opinion, has written that fascism desires the state to be "based on broad foundations of popular support." He has said further, "A State based on millions of individuals who recognize its authority, feel its action, and are ready to serve its ends is not the tyrannical state of a mediaeval lordling. It has nothing in common with the despotic States existing prior to or subsequent to 1789."¹

¹ Mussolini, *Fascism Doctrine and Institutions*, 29. "Ardita" Publishers.

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Even medieval dictators could not afford to be completely indifferent to the opposition or support of the people. Machiavelli, keen observer of the rise and fall of autocratic rulers at the turn of the sixteenth century, recognized the importance of popular support. He wrote in *The Prince*:

... he who usurps the government of any State is to execute and put into practice all the cruelties which he thinks material at once, that he may have no occasion to renew them often, but that by his discontinuance he may mollify the people, and by his benefits bring them over to his side. He who does otherwise, whether for fear or ill counsel, is obliged to be always ready with his knife in his hand; for he can never repose any confidence in his subjects, whilst they, by reason of his fresh and continued inhumanities, cannot be secure against him.

He who arrives at the sovereignty by the assistance of the great ones preserves it with more difficulty than he who is advanced by the people.

The modern age has seen an enormous improvement in the technique of manufacturing consent. Modern methods of communication and the social contacts of this period make the formation of public opinion possible, and perhaps inevitable, in a large area. The management of opinion thus becomes the path to power. Contemporary dictators, once they have got hold of the government, have found themselves able, through control of the channels of communication, to entrench themselves in power with a security and minimum of bloodshed that makes the average dictator of Machiavelli's day seem a clumsy amateur by comparison.

Although both dictatorships and democracies are based upon popular support, there are fundamental differences in the way consent is obtained and in the way decisions are arrived at. Democracies use majority rule for the peaceful settlement of disagreements and disputes and arrive at decisions after dis-

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cussion. Acceptance of this principle is not based upon the assumption that the majority will always be right, but upon a belief that the process of making decisions by majority rule is superior to any other way in which they can be made. If the majority acts mistakenly, the way is always open for an individual or a minority to change the majority through persuasion. This is the process of settling issues that is most educational and least destructive, and the only one yet devised that is compatible with the dignity assumed by democracy to adhere in individual personality.²

The dictators build up and maintain majorities, but their process and their results are fundamentally different from the democratic way, in that advocates of conflicting policies are not allowed to express their opinions and attempt to persuade the people. The party of the dictator has a monopoly on the instrumentalities of persuasion. A majority manufactured in this way may be allowed to express itself in a plebiscite, and the result of such plebiscites is generally an expression of unanimity of opinion that would be impressive were it not for the basic difference between consent in a dictatorship and consent in a democracy. A kind of artificial opinion has been created and, like any well made artificial product, it reveals a mechanical perfection that surpasses that produced by normal growth.

The democratic idea that public opinion should be formed through the free competition of ideas stands face to face with the dictatorial mode that makes access to the public mind a government-controlled monopoly. Since the advent of the post-war dictators, the opponents of democracy have increased in aggressiveness and vociferousness, and possibly in numbers. They proclaim the development of a political system vastly superior to old-fashioned democracy. The world is asked to choose be-

² See Carl Landauer, "The American Way," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 633, 634.

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tween the democratic ideal and hostile ideals that we previously thought had been on the way to extinction for at least three hundred years.

In reality, the fascist dictatorship is not a normal development in the process of political evolution. It is a reversion to a more primitive type of organization, and is brought about by abnormal economic and psychological conditions. In the case of the two great powers, Italy and Germany, fascism obviously came as a product of the dislocations of the World War.

In both of these countries, economic and psychological factors combined to drive the people toward a revolutionary attack on their difficulties. Widespread discontent resulting from the post-war heritage of hard times and economic burdens was accompanied by bitter dissatisfaction with the political terms of the peace treaty. In each instance, the nation was weak and the people wanted to be strong. They were dissatisfied with the failure of their leaders to solve their problems by conventional methods. Disorder threatened and the democratic system was not rooted strongly enough to stand the strain. Fascism developed as a way out that appealed to those unwilling to accept communism.

The party membership was composed of varied elements—dissatisfied ex-soldiers, socialists, anarchists, extreme rightists, a great many people from the lower middle class. It was predominantly a middle-class movement with capitalistic financial support. The economic and psychological level of its membership was not dissimilar from that of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. Essentially, it was a mob movement seeking simple solutions to complicated problems with accompanying aggressive action and turning to leaders of the strong-man and snake-charmer type.

Fascism came to power as a capitalist-supported movement because the big bankers and industrialists preferred it to com-

munism or socialistic democracy. When economic crises and popular discontent seemed to threaten the basic institutions of capitalism, the result was the construction of a police state designed to crush democratic opinion and organization.³ Large numbers of the middle class provided the mass following of fascism because they were looking for economic and political salvation but were hostile to communism. The sense of private ownership was strong among them, and communism seemed to threaten their property interests. In the past, communists have alienated the middle classes everywhere by their emphasis on class consciousness and their talk of a dictatorship of the proletariat.

In both Italy and Germany, when fascism gained control of the state, it did not act simply as the hired servant of capitalism, ready always to jump at the sound of the master's voice. The radical economic measures and belligerent international policies of fascist leaders have often been very distasteful to the big bankers and business men. They would prefer orthodox finance at home and peaceful relations with capitalistic interests abroad, but they must follow where fascism leads, because they depend upon it for the preservation of their economic power.

The persecution of racial minorities and political opponents at home is one of the invariable accompaniments of dictatorship. Thomas Mann has suggested that the terror of the dictators corrupts character, releases every evil human impulse, and turns men into cowardly hypocrites and informers. It develops in them a pathological pleasure in the abuse of weaker peoples.⁴ Conventionally inhibited types of conduct become socially approved. Pleasure in the abuse of helpless people has found expression in Germany, particularly in the concentration camps and in the treatment of the Jews. Every kind of humiliation

³G.D.H. Cole, in *What Is Ahead of Us?* 23. The Macmillan Co.

⁴Thomas Mann, *The Coming Victory of Democracy*, 24. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

and disgrace has been visited upon the Jews. Not content with the economic destruction of this unhappy people, the Nazis have heaped personal insults and tortures, both physical and psychological, upon small children and old people as well as upon those better able to bear them. This is a product of the mentality that dictatorships help to produce. Race prejudice is first cultivated by leaders who would be dictators, to give the people something to hate with enthusiasm and to distract their attention from their own troubles. The idea is that the people will feel better if they can push somebody down who is already a little worse off than they are. Finally, race prejudice becomes an outlet for pent-up emotions and the desire to exercise power and be strong. It is the small boy who has been held in check by larger boys, turned bully in his relations with smaller children.

The establishment of a secret police force to spy upon the people and prevent the expression of individual discontent is one of the effective means of popular control used by dictators. The secret police encourage citizens to watch one another and act as informers on their neighbors. They make criticism of the party in power exceedingly hazardous in any circle, and the organization of opposition almost impossible. Among the most efficient of such police forces is the Nazi *Gestapo*, a body of spies disciplined along military lines. They may issue orders direct to civilians and have the power to arrest and punish without trial. They "watch every household in the land and pounce on opposition before it is organized (and unfortunately sometimes before it is even thought of). They override the law and punish as they think fit."⁵ They are the police club that supplements propaganda as an agency for confining the possibilities of public opinion formation within the limits decided upon by the party of the dictator.

⁵ Stephen H. Roberts, *The House that Hitler Built*, 91. Harper & Brothers.

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Official censorship controls all regular channels of communication to the end that the citizen may get only the information that the Party wants him to have, whether it comes by radio, printed page, or public meeting. The president of the Reich Chamber of Literature announced in 1936 that he would eliminate "the lukewarm among the bookdealers," and said, "Christian art was likewise forced on its age with loving force and National Socialist books are the only books that will go to the people. . . . Resistance will be broken with dynamite." ⁶ Newspaper editors are summarily removed if they vary from the instructions issued by the propaganda ministry. What is happening in Spain, in Russia, in the British Empire? Are the Americans starving to death by the hundreds? Is Czechoslovakia an uncivilized little country brutally mistreating its German minority? What is the condition of German and Italian crops and government finance? The citizen gets the government's version, which is likely to be a mixture of fact and fiction. Criticism of the nation's leaders is not permitted. The significance of such censorship can be appreciated fully only when we remember that it is what people think they see that is the decisive factor in determining the way they are going to act.

Intellectual freedom cannot survive in a dictatorship. The decline of Germany in this field is particularly tragic because of the respected position which that country once occupied in the realm of scholarship and learning. Symbolic of the Nazi attitude was the great bonfire that Dr. Goebbels arranged in Berlin in the early days of the regime for the destruction of "undesirable" literature. Thousands of books from the libraries of the universities made fuel for the flames. Included were the works of Thomas Mann, Remarque, Einstein, Freud, Schnitzler, Marx, Zola, Ludwig, Jack London, and Upton Sin-

⁶ *New York Times*, October 26, 1936.

clair. Today the bookstores do not carry the books of such authors.

University faculties and courses of study have been drastically pruned and renovated by the Nazis. A large proportion of the most distinguished German scholars have been forced out of their positions and replaced with professors whose chief claim to merit has been their loyalty to the party. Lectures on such subjects as "Hitler's Peace Speeches," "Colonial Revision as a Legal-Moral Question," "Introduction Into the Science of Human Inheritance and Into German Racial Hygiene," and "The Germanic and the Semitic World in the Light of Racial-Soul Research" have been added to the curriculum. The president of a great American university paid tribute to the old German scholarship, and by implication expressed his opinion of the new, when he wrote on the occasion of the University of Goettingen's bicentennial celebration:

We wish to mark our appreciation and admiration for that spirit of scholarship and culture, that freedom of thought and inquiry, that absence of race and religious prejudice, which gave to the old Germany its leadership for generations in philosophy, in science, in the fine arts, in music and industry, and which brought to the German people world-wide and grateful recognition and leadership. May that which we now celebrate and salute quickly return to help steady this rocking world.⁷

The main lure that fascism holds out to a discontented people is the promise of better economic conditions. But experience has demonstrated that dictators have no magic formula for the improvement of economic ills. The production of foodstuffs in Germany is less today than it was in 1933, despite attempts to increase it. The holdings of the Reichbank in foreign exchange and gold reserves has steadily declined, falling from

⁷ President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia University, quoted in *The New York Times*, May 11, 1937.

2,637,000,000 Reichmarks in 1929 to 72,000,000 in 1936.⁸ The government operates continually with a huge deficit, but it does not have to give any accounting either to the people or their representatives. There are no budget estimates and no parliamentary debates. Unemployment has been reduced to some extent, but the energy thus recruited has been used mainly in rearmament and huge public works programs. The story of fascism in Italy is similar in its main outlines. The Italian adventure into Ethiopia seems to have been largely a result of economic pressure at home, and yet the gains from it were of highly questionable economic value. Dictators gain a certain amount of efficiency from the concentration of power and responsibility, but they lose much of what is gained by building up a huge bureaucracy and fritter away the rest of it on war or preparations for war. The people must do without butter in order that they may have cannon, but cannon are manufactured and armies raised with great efficiency.

The German people are told that bread will be more plentiful when they get the rich grain fields of the Ukraine. Italians sweat and fight and die in Ethiopia because their dictator tells them that is the path to prosperity and honor. German and Italian "volunteers" are sent to die in Spain in order that their respective fatherlands may get control of Spanish resources. In the dictatorships, in the language of *Alice in Wonderland's* White Queen, "The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday—but never jam to-day."

The power of the dictatorship over the economic life of its people is used as a forceful weapon for the control of opinion. The government maintains such a close control over business and the professions that an individual who incurs the wrath of the Party will have a hard time making a living. Further, a

⁸ Stephen H. Roberts, *The House that Hitler Built*, 146, 147. Harper & Brothers.

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large proportion of the people are directly, or almost directly, dependent upon the government for a livelihood. In Germany, the government controls about two-thirds of the national economy. "This means that two out of every three Germans, workers and industrialists, are directly or indirectly dependent on the government and its agencies for their livelihood, and this livelihood depends in turn on their professed loyalty to the regime." ⁹

With the channels of communication controlled by the government and manipulated by expert propagandists, with secret police scattered as spies among the people to prevent the expression of discontent or criticism, popular discussion of public questions is confined within the narrowest limits. Even in the schools, propaganda replaces education, and party loyalty replaces scholarship as the test of the teacher's fitness for his job. Economic dependence on the state completes the subservience of the individual and the enslavement of his opinion. Except in secret underground movements, only agreement may be expressed. With opposition outlawed and divergence of opinion made a crime, there settles down what Thomas Mann has called, "the funereal silence of dictatorship."

In the field of international relations, the influence of the dictatorships has been far reaching and momentous. The morals of international relations always have been the lowest common denominator of human character. Self-interest has been the guiding principle, with standards of conduct largely set by the nation with the lowest morals. Progress has been very slow, but progress has been made. In 1625, Grotius, sometimes called the father of international law, wrote in his Introduction to *The Law of War and Peace*, "I saw prevailing throughout the Christian world a license in making war of which even barbarous nations would have been ashamed; re-

⁹ *New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 4, 1938, 13.

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course being had to arms for slight reasons or no reason; and when arms were once taken up, all reverence for divine and human law was thrown away, just as if men were thenceforth authorized to commit all crimes without restraint." From that time forward, slow and painful progress was made toward establishing higher standards of conduct in international relations, both in war and in peace. Non-combatants were assured a certain amount of protection in time of war. Prisoners of war were entitled to equitable treatment. There was an assumption that treaties would be observed. All of this progress has been swept away within a few years by the conduct of the dictator-governed countries.

We assume now that civilians will be machine-gunned, gassed, and bombed with little restraint whenever war breaks out. A prominent Italian aviator has expressed his feeling that the bombing of an Ethiopian hut full of natives was rare good fun. In Spain, the airplanes of the Germans and Italians have repeatedly bombed schoolhouses and busy city streets. The bombing of the little town of Guernica was a particularly flagrant case. On a marketing day, when the women and children were sure to be on the streets, airplanes flew over and dropped heavy bombs on the town, then swooped low and machine-gunned the running people—men, women, and children. The town had no anti-aircraft guns with which to defend itself. Similar incidents have occurred in China as part of the Japanese invasion.

The cities of Europe are being prepared for bombing in a future war. None feels safe. Gas masks are being manufactured and distributed by the millions for children as well as for civilian adults. We have almost reached the point where the butchery of a helpless civilian population in a war no longer shocks us as long as it is somebody else. "We are again becoming accustomed to the ferocity of which several centuries of

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civilization had seemed to cure the human race; and this new barbarity is far more dangerous than that of the savages because it is armed by science.”¹⁰

The dictators have set the pace in disregarding treaties. Machiavelli laid down the rule that, “A prince . . . who is wise and prudent, cannot or ought not to keep his parole, when the keeping of it is to his prejudice, and the causes for which he promised removed. . . . Nevertheless, it is of great consequence to disguise your inclination, and to play the hypocrite well; and men are so simple in their temper and so submissive to their present necessities, that he that is neat and cleanly in his collusions shall never want people to practice them upon.” In the Machiavellian age in which we live, this has become an accepted principle of international conduct.

In 1938, Secretary of State Cordell Hull voiced the American feeling of disappointment at the trend of events. Speaking of the American desire for peace and the adherence of the United States to the pact outlawing war as an instrument of national policy, he said, “All this gives us a moral right to express our deep concern over the rising tide of lawlessness, the growing disregard of treaties, the increasing reversion to the use of force, and the numerous other ominous tendencies that are emerging in the sphere of international relations.” And he said further, “The catastrophic developments of recent years, the startling events of the past few weeks offer a tragic demonstration of how quickly the contagious scourge of treaty-breaking and armed violence spreads from one region to another.”¹¹ Some months after he made these statements, the French betrayal of Czechoslovakia offered notable evidence that even democracies are not immune from the contagion.

¹⁰ Andre Maurois, “The Tragic Decline of the Humane Ideal,” *New York Times Magazine*, June 19, 1938, 1.

¹¹ *New York Times*, March 18, 1938.

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The dictatorships are bent upon careers of conquest, and the world will have no peace until they are destroyed either by internal developments or by external force. Small nations have fallen prey first. Ethiopia has been absorbed, Spain has been made a shambles, and Czechoslovakia has been dismembered. As the dictatorships grow in strength, they will reach for increasingly larger prizes. By its very nature, a dictatorship must be always on the march either at home or abroad, and foreign adventure helps to distract attention from hungry stomachs and lack of freedom at home.

Woodrow Wilson declared in his war message, April 2, 1917, "A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants." And, "The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty." Events since the World War have demonstrated more clearly than ever the truth of his statements. The World War did not, as he hoped it would, make the world safe for democracy. Perhaps war never can perform that task, but of one thing we can be sure, democracy cannot exist safely side by side with dictatorship. The peace of the world is not menaced by democracies, but by dictatorships, and we can hope for lasting peace only when there are no dictatorships.

The outlook that confronts the people of the democracies is not a pleasant one. Externally, they face the probability that if they do not fight the dictatorships they will be caught and destroyed in the onward march of those aggressive powers; and if they do fight, another world war may destroy freedom where it yet remains. Internally, democracy faces the danger that economic or political crises may lead to a demand for drastic action with an accompanying swing toward fascism.

Public opinion in democratic countries is a robust and sov-

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foreign force that controls the government and political institutions. In the fascist states, it is artificially cultivated and officially controlled and manipulated. This means that when a dictatorship is once firmly established, the development of the public opinion necessary to overthrow it by internal action is made very difficult. The people of the free countries are still in a position to choose between democracy and dictatorship. It is of the utmost importance that they see clearly what is involved in the choice and that they know how to carry out their will most effectively.

As increasingly complex economic and social problems are dealt with by the democratic state, the way should be kept open for progressive development of political institutions. Orderly progress is a safety valve against revolution. Suggestions for improvement should be received with hospitality. When the need for readjustments comes, perhaps in time of crisis, it is dangerous to act in a spirit of too great excitement and ignore the forms of law and the written constitution. They were designed to preserve liberty as well as order. On the other hand, it is neither wise nor practical to regard the written constitution as an instrument that must be held forever sacred as it came from the pen of the fathers. When the house gets on fire, we should not save the family heirloom while the baby burns to death in his crib. The safest way to maintain political equilibrium is to consider progress as normal.

There is an increasing tendency for the peoples of the world to live in what one writer calls "the mood of crisis."¹² Perhaps more than anything else, war accustoms people to the suspension of the democratic process. This was notably true during the World War period. Then the depression revived the psychology of crisis and the feeling that quick and drastic action

¹² Charles W. Ferguson, "The Mood of Crisis," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVII (1938), 438-41.

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was necessary. The danger of crisis psychology lies in the tendency to substitute energy for intelligence at such times. Energy may serve temporarily as a substitute for reason, but there is danger that an attempt will be made to make the substitution permanent.

Americans may argue, in response to such forebodings, that the mood of crisis always has been a temporary one in the past, and the democratic process has been restored when the emergency was over. Although this is true, we cannot fail to realize that the danger of suspending liberty is greater now than it ever was before. Fascist dictators have set an example that is attractive to some Americans. The more conservative of the big industrialists have viewed the increasing power of organized labor in recent years with extreme distaste. They would welcome fascism as a means of destroying labor's power and returning the workers to subjection. Such forces might command enough middle class support to prevent a return to democracy after the establishment of arbitrary government in another war or other crisis.

A defense for democracy, to be successful, must be built firmly upon the common people. No other group can be depended upon to save it. This means first of all that the economic welfare of the common people cannot be neglected. People who are hungry do not think rationally. People who are permanently underfed and economically insecure will be concerned primarily with the needs of elemental existence rather than with principles. They will be likely prey for demagogues. Since progress comes only as a result of struggle and by a process of self-help, it follows that the laborers must be organized and strong enough to look out for their own interests. But the middle class, more particularly the small business and professional men and salaried employees, also constitute a large proportion of the common people, and this class has

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generally been afraid of an aggressive labor movement, as it has been afraid of communism. If the small business and professional men and salaried employees could be made to feel that they had nothing to fear from increasing power of organized labor, democracy would probably be safe.¹³ Labor and the middle class are the two great groups most concerned with the preservation of democracy, and together they are powerful enough to insure its continuance without question.

The survival of democracy does not depend upon economic factors alone. The public opinion necessary to preserve it is a product of certain qualities of mind and character as well. A people must be intelligent enough to cut through the devices of propagandists and find the truth. They must be idealistic enough to hold human personality sacred, and therefore be loyal to democracy by conviction. They must have the courage to make great sacrifices, if necessary, for the democratic ideal. Thus far, the democratic nations have given ground without exception in every trial of strength with the dictators. Every such surrender weakens popular government and strengthens fascism. A people who are seized with a "paralyzing fear" at the thought of war in defense of democracy cannot save it from fascists who are not afraid to fight for the faith that is in them. A certain toughness of fiber in a people is necessary for the survival of free government. Strength of convictions is of vital importance in determining the force of public opinion. Only when intelligence and character and courage are staple characteristics will democracy be safe. If these characteristics can be re-created in our people so that they will deal with the complex and troublesome problems of our time in the same spirit that enabled our fathers to wrest their freedom from resisting kings, the vultures that circle over us will have spread their wings in vain.

¹³ Carl Landauer, "The American Way," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol. CLXXVI (1938), 642.

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